BRITISH COLUMBIA

MINISTRY OF ATTORNEY GENERAL

Specialized Victim Assistance Program

Program Standards
(Gender Neutral)

Prepared for the B.C. Association of
Specialized Victim Assistance and Counselling Programs
by
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Glossary of Terms

Active Measures	Specific actions to reduce barriers to service for marginalized groups.
Agency	An organization which provides services to people.
Barrier	A line of boundary or separation, natural or artificially contructed, which is placed and/or serves as a limitation or obstruction.
Client Satisfaction Survey	A comprehensive investigation into the level of contentment of survivors with the service they receive from the program (i.e., the degree to which the program addressed their needs & expectations).
Crime	An act defined by legislation and punishable by law.
Criminal Justice System	The organized system of justice in Canada which includes the following components: the police, Crown counsel, defence counsel, the courts, corrections, parole, the victim(s), the witness(es), the accused, and members of the public.
Critical Incident	Any incident of a serious nature that has the potential to traumatize those involved. (e.g., acts of violence, suicide attempts, fire, theft, any natural disaster).
Documented Evidence	Written indication which clearly demonstrates that a particular statement is true. The verification may occur in various ways (e.g., policy statements, charts and forms used in daily practice, statements signed by staff, volunteers or clients, public notices, etc.)
Effectiveness	The degree to which (quantity) and how well (quality) stated goals and results have been reached.
Efficiency	A measure of how much it costs to carry out program related activities to produce desired results. Efficiency is a comparative measure. It can only be explored by looking at several equivalent programs; or at one program over several years.

Feminism	The belief system which declares the equality of the sexes and advocates equal social, political and economic rights for women.
Heterosexism	An ideological system that denies and stigmatizes any non-heterosexual identity, behaviour or relationship.
Holistic	An approach that considers the whole as opposed to just one or more of the parts or aspects of a person, system, etc.
Homophobia	Extreme fear and/or hatred of persons who are sexually attracted to others of the same sex.
Marginalized Groups	Populations that have been pushed to a reduced position in society as a result of social, economic and political systems that operate, either intentionally or unconsciously, to maintain them (i.e., such populations) in a position of reduced access to the rights and priviledges of the mainstream or dominant culture.
Oppression	Systematic use of force and/or authority by one individual or group over another for the purposes of control and subjugation.
Partner	One of two persons involved in an intimate relationship.
Primary Victims	Those people directly affected by a crime.
Secondary Victims	Those people related to the primary victim who are also affected by the crime (e.g., non-offending partners, family members and close friends who are the informal support system for the victim).
Sexism	Individual and/or systemic discrimination against any individual based on their gender.
Survivors	Persons who have experienced adult sexual assault, childhood sexual abuse/assault, violence against women in relationships or criminal harassment.
Victim Services	The institutionalized provision of information and guidance through the justice system.

Program Standards

Specialized Victim Assistance Programs

INTRODUCTION

Purpose

The Specialized Victim Assistance Program provides justice-related services to those who have been victimized by the following crimes against the person: violence against women in relationships, child sexual assault/abuse, adult sexual assault and criminal harassment (i.e., stalking).

Historical Development

The Specialized Victim Assistance Program (SVAP) was initially established in 1987 as part of the Victim Assistance Program in British Columbia.[1] At that time, twenty specialized programs were set up across the province. This number was expanded in 1991, as a result of the Law and Order Initiative of the provincial government. At the point of development of these standards, a total of thirty-seven SVAP's exist across B.C.

Responsibilities of SVAP's have expanded over the years, as changes have been made to related federal and provincial policy and legislation (e.g., Violence Against Women in Relationships Policy, Criminal Injury Compensation Amendment Act, federal anti-stalking legislation).

In addition to the chronological developments mentioned above, it is also important to note that individual SVAP programs in different regions of the province often have their own emphasis and unique character. Each one has developed in response to the particular needs and challenges of the area in which the program is situated and in relation to other local services for individuals who have been victimized in the community by adult sexual assault, violence against women in relationships, historical childhood sexual assault/abuse or stalking. Clearly, not all Specialized Victim Assistance Programs are identical.

[1] The B.C. Victim Assistance Program of 1987 included the expansion of Police-based programs, creation of a Crown Counsel victim/Witness Services program, and establishment of the Victim/Offender Reparation Program.

Program Objectives

Terms of the provincial government contracts for SVAP's, outline the objectives of the Program as follows:

- to provide services to survivors[2] of the above-listed crimes, that are appropriate to the nature of their victimization, and to the survivor's subsequent level of involvement with the criminal justice system
- to ensure that survivors are supported as an integral part of the justice process
- to help survivors come to terms with the effects of the crimes committed against them.

In addition to providing services to those who have been victimized directly, SVAP's also support non-offending family members and friends who are close to the immediate survivor. These persons are considered secondary victims of the crime.

See later section entitled Specific Service Standards for detail on particular elements of SVAP services.

Social Context

Historically, violence has been one result of a world view which supports the right of one individual or group to oppress others, a right granted by the privilege of status associated with gender, race, religion, class, sexual orientation, age and physical ability. [3]

Values and behaviours arising from this world view have been extremely slow to change. For example, it was not until 1918 that white women had the right to vote in federal elections in Canada. It took until 1948 for Chinese and South Asian Canadians to gain the same right and 12 additional years for people of First Nations. It took until 1983 for various kinds of sexual assault to become recognized in Canadian law, and for sexual assault to be understood as much broader than "rape" alone. Power imbalances, and the abuse of power often associated with those imbalances, remain embedded in the social, political and economic structures of modern society. They continue to show up today as sexism, heterosexism, homophobia, racism, etc.

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[2] The term "victims" from the contract has been replaced by "survivors" for the purpose of these program standards.

[3] Historically, this view was, in fact, supported by a European legal system that treated women and children as property. Many other cultures have traditionally reflected similar values and attitudes.

In crimes of violence such as sexual assault and physical or emotional abuse, one individual imposes force over another to gain power and control. In the majority of cases, this violence occurs against those who are most vulnerable: women and children. Men too experience crimes of violence such as sexual assault and childhood physical and sexual abuse.

The justice, social and health systems, in conjunction with general social attitudes, have frequently re-victimized child and adult survivors of sexual assault and physical and emotional abuse, because of myths or outdated beliefs deeply imbedded in those institutions.

The SVAP's was established as a result of growing public awareness of the extent of physical and sexual violence that exists in our society, and the needs of survivors for emotional support, information and practical assistance in dealing with the trauma associated with experiencing violence.

Philosophical Framework

Respect, validation and empowerment are key to the recovery of those who have experienced adult or childhood sexual assault or physical and emotional abuse. Because of general social attitudes, it is common for survivors to feel distrustful of others and of themselves, and to feel alienated from others in the community. Survivors may also, in part, blame themselves for the violence that has been perpetrated upon them.

To most effectively support survivors, SVAP's are delivered under the following general principles of operation.

- Participation in the program is voluntary.
- The experience of the person who has been victimized is validated and respected at all times.
- Priority is placed on the actual and perceived emotional and physical safety of the survivor and any children who may be involved, rather than on keeping the family together, should these be in conflict.
- The abuser is seen to be responsible for the abuse/assault. Blame is never placed on the person who has been victimized.

- Services are provided in a manner which neither judges nor labels the survivor.
- Survivors are seen to be the experts regarding their own experience: they know best what they need, which can change over time, and are supported to make their own decisions.

- The program works to enhance the survivor's capacity for self-advocacy and self-empowerment. Self determination is central to the survivor's recovery.
-
- The role of support worker includes educating survivors about the social context of violence and the dynamics of abuse/assault in order to help inform the survivor's decision-making process.

- Agencies operating the program recognize the possibility of vicarious traumatization for staff working with survivors. Agencies are committed to supporting staff fully and ensuring their safety on the job.

The above principles of operation reflect a feminist perspective, which acknowledges the power imbalances and inequities in society.

Program Standards Development

In conjunction with the April 1996 report of the Auditor General to the B.C. legislature on accountability [4], and simultaneous work by the Contract Reform Council, the Provincial Government began a concerted effort towards introducing program standards to ensure a baseline throughout the province of services delivered with public funds. In the not too distant future, all agencies providing community-delivered services under contract with the Province will be required to meet both program standards and specific organizational standards already set by the Provincial Government.

At the same time Government was considering the move to introduce standards for service provision, the BC Association of Specialized Victim Assistance and Counselling Programs stepped up its efforts to ensure that the lead for development of program standards would be based in the field, where the work with survivors actually occurs. When it then came time to begin development, an agreement was made between the Provincial Association and the Ministry of Attorney General for the Association to facilitate and coordinate SVAP's in the work of setting program standards.

[4] The report, titled "Enhancing Accountability for Performance: A Framework and an Implementation Plan", was presented jointly by the Auditor General of B.C. and the Deputy Minister' Council in April 1996.

Over the years, various tools have been created in British Columbia to support and strengthen the operation of services to those who have been victimized by crime. In some cases, these tools have been developed specifically to assist survivors of violence against women in relationships, adult sexual assault, child sexual abuse/assault and stalking. Examples include:

- Victims of Crime Act
- Victim Support Worker Handbooks (General, Child Abuse, Sexual Assault and Wife Assault)
- Victim Service Program, Volunteer Training Curriculum
- Victim Service Program, Management Manual
- Job Skill Profile Chart, Victim Service Manager/Coordinator/ Caseworker
- Victim Service Programs, Service Delivery Matrix

Baseline program standards for SVAP's build on the above resources, as well as several others:

- National Organization for Victim Assistance DRAFT Victim Service Standards
- Western Association of Directors of Volunteers, Volunteer Program Standards
- Program standards used in other social & community service sectors [5]
- Related standards material from other jurisdictions
- Current best practices of SVAP's operating within British Columbia.

The use of standards can be advantageous both for those receiving service and for organizations operating SVAP programs.

Standards provide benchmarks for assessing programs and improving overall service quality. By surfacing issues and directing organizational attention on how to best respond, a review against recognized standards can help focus energy where it most needs to go for improving services.

Standards help ensure that a baseline of service is available across the province. Anywhere in the province, a survivor can expect to receive a basic level of support from the nearest SVAP.

[5] For example: STV Counselling DRAFT Program Standards (BCASVACP); Standards Manual & Interpretive Guidelines (CARF); Crisis Intervention Program Standards (American Assoc. of Suicidology); Women's Centre Evaluation Framework (B.C. Ministry of Women's Equality); Social Auditing for Voluntary Organizations (Gavin Perryman & Associates); Outcome-Based Performance Measures (Accreditation Council on Services for People with Disabilities), Accreditation Program (Ontario Assoc. of Children's Mental Health Centres), Measuring Program Outcomes (United Way of America).

For an organization, being reviewed successfully in conjunction with a set of recognized standards can enhance its credibility and support among clients, other service providers, funders and the general public.

If a peer review approach is used with the standards in evaluating programs, program and organizational reviews can also assist in strengthening the sector. Having people participate cross-sectorally facilitates peer interaction and education and helps to build the sector across the province.

It is important to note that baseline program standards are a beginning, not an end. They do not necessarily reflect best practices in any particular aspect of the SVAP program, nor do they guarantee a high quality of overall service. What they offer is a foundation upon which there is general agreement among service providers as to a minimum level for efficient and effective program operation, and from which an agency can build organizational performance and service quality.

PROGRAM STANDARDS

Program Purpose

1.0 Purpose and Function

PRINCIPLE: SVAP services are available on a voluntary basis to survivors and secondary victims who choose to access them.

All programs provide emotional support specific to the unique needs of the survivor, practical assistance (e.g., help with completing forms), information (e.g., case-specific, justice system related) and referrals to other community agencies for additional support (e.g., STV counselling).

Optional services also include crisis response, court support and accompaniment transportation/ accompaniment to interviews, medical appointments, other meetings and public education.

Specific services offered by SVAP's will vary according to the particular needs of the community, the availability of other justice-related services and the resources of the program.

It is important that information regarding the program be communicated to all individuals and organizations who might have an interest in its existence, so that the program is a well-linked and an integral part of the community network of supports to survivors, and so that those who need to access it may do so.

INTENT: To ensure that the general public, community agencies, justice system personnel, and especially those who have been victimized by sexual assault, violence against women in relationships, childhood sexual abuse and criminal harassment, know that the program exists, what its purpose is, and how it can be accessed.

STANDARDS STATEMENT	PERFORMANCE INDICATORS
1.1 The purposes of the program are clearly stated in verbal and written communication.	• Clear statement of the program purpose in all written materials describing the program • agency administration and program staff able to clearly describe the purpose of program
1.2 A clear set of program objectives exists, which is consistent with objectives outlined in the funding agreement.	• written set of program objectives is clear and consistent with contract language

1.0 Purpose and Function (cont'd.)

STANDARDS STATEMENT	PERFORMANCE INDICATORS
1.3 The agency has clearly indicated who the program is designed to serve and the specific services provided by the program, and includes this information along with other details important to accessing the program in program-related communications materials	• policy or practice statement regarding who the program serves • written outline of services provided by the program • program brochure/flyer includes details on who the program serves, what services are provided, how to access the program, including self-referral, and that the program is voluntary •
1.4 Information about the program is readily available to survivors, volunteers, staff, justice system personnel, other community referral agencies and anyone else interested in the program.	• program brochures and/or other communication materials related to the program are visible and accessible in the agency where the program operates, local offices of the justice system and other community referral agencies, and any other appropriate public space • wherever possible, program information is disseminated through local media

CLIENT SERVICES

2.0 Role of Victim Service Worker

PRINCIPLE: The role of a SVAP worker is multi-faceted and continually changing. It is dependent upon/responsive to the particular needs of the survivor, where the individual is in the recovery process and how each person wants to proceed with services within the limits of the program.

The victim service worker must be able to support survivors in determining their needs and preferences and addressing them through providing emotional support, information, practical assistance, court orientation/support and referrals to appropriate community resources.

Because the needs and life situation of each survivor are different, the support relationship will vary with the individual. Above all, supporting survivors involves helping them set directions and make decisions for themselves.

INTENT: To ensure the role of victim service worker in the Specialized Victim Assistance Program is understood by staff, volunteers, persons served, justice system personnel, and other community agencies and that those operating in the role have the competencies to be effective in the job.

2.0 Role of Victim Service Worker (cont'd.)

STANDARDS STATEMENT	PERFORMANCE INDICATORS
2.1 Specialized Victim Assistance Workers are able to demonstrate the following qualities: • Ability to communicate clearly, use effective communication skills (e.g., active listening, paraphrasing, questioning, permission giving, empowering, giving information not advice, being concrete/clear, summarizing, limit setting) • Ability to handle conflict and advocate effectively • Non-judgmental and empathic approach • Responsive to the needs of individuals • Ability to work co-operatively as part of a team • Knowledge about the social context of violence against those who are vulnerable and the dynamics of oppression • Knowledgeable about the criminal justice system • Knowledgeable about community resources and able to make appropriate referrals • Flexibility • Ability to accept responsibility ***INTERPRETIVE GUIDELINES:*** *The qualities outlined in the standard above are observable on a continual basis in the ways workers interact with others. Evaluation of these qualities is both ongoing and part of the annual performance review.*	• evidence in interactions with survivors • evidence in interactions with peers, colleagues and management • evidence in written reports • reported in client surveys

2.0 Role of Victim Service Worker (cont'd.)

STANDARDS STATEMENT	PERFORMANCE INDICATORS
2.2 The Specialized Victim Assistance Worker is able to demonstrate the ability to perform the following tasks which comprise their role. a. Provide Emotional Support Workers provide emotional support to survivors. ***INTERPRETIVE GUIDELINES*** • *Emotional support is likely to include:* • *Acknowledgment of fears and feelings and creation of strategies for dealing with them* • *Ongoing follow-up and availability within program limits* • *Assisting survivors in identifying their strengths and mechanisms for coping with challenges* • *Non-judgmental response* • *Supporting survivor to make own decisions* • *Validating the signs of recovery* • *Debriefing reaction to specific events (e.g., arrest, charges)* • *Discussion of specific anxieties in preparing for court* • *Allowing for venting of frustrations* • *Discussing strategies for coping with testifying* • *Debriefing after court appearance, reaction to court outcome, sentencing* •	• worker demonstrates ability to support survivors as outlined above through regular supervision (by peers or supervisor), case consultations, written reports, performance evaluation processes, client feedback surveys, etc.

2.0 Role of Victim Service Worker (cont'd.)

STANDARDS STATEMENT	PERFORMANCE INDICATORS
b. Provide Information Workers communicate needed information in clear and manageable amounts to survivors, as is relevant and/or as needed. ***INTERPRETIVE GUIDELINES*** *Information of the following nature is provided:* • *criminal justice system - principles, functions, process* • *Victims of Crime Act* • *Definition of arrest* • *Rights of the accused* • *Investigation status, specific charges* • *Roles of criminal justice system representatives (e.g., police, special investigation units, Crown counsel, coroner, defense counsel, courts, corrections, probation officers)* • *Levels of court, court procedures* • *How and where to attend court, if victim wishes* • *Updates on court case progress* • *Standard security precautions in the courtroom* • *Court orders* • *Probation* • *Post-sentencing* • *The dynamics of abuse*	• worker demonstrates ability to provide information as outlined above through regular supervision (by peers or supervisor), case consultations, written reports, performance evaluation processes, client feedback surveys, etc.

2.0 Role of Victim Service Worker (cont'd.)

STANDARDS STATEMENT	PERFORMANCE INDICATORS
c. Provide Practical Assistance Workers provide practical assistance to the survivors ***INTERPRETIVE GUIDELINES:*** *Practical assistance may include any of the following:* • *Development and/or revision of safety plan* • *Assistance with getting copies of court orders* • *Explanation of procedures and accompaniment to meetings with Crown, police, etc.* • *Assistance with damage and loss estimates, restitution information* • *Explanation of option of Victim Impact Statement* • *Assistance in completing forms (e.g., Criminal Injury Compensation, Victim Impact Statement), if requested* • *Liaison with Crown re court orientation, identifying issues, reasons for charges* • *Discuss applications for non-publication of victims' names* • *If applicable, discuss applications for changes in court configuration for vulnerable/disabled survivors* • *Tour of court house* • *Advise/arrange for toys, activities, private waiting room for young children* • *Plan strategy for dealing with the media* • *Court accompaniment, accompaniment to sentencing, hearing, if requested* • *Assistance with transportation, if requested* • *Intervention with employer, if necessary provision of, or assistance in securing, translation where needed*	• worker demonstrates ability to provide practical assistance to survivors as outlined above through regular supervision (by peers or supervisor), case consultations, written reports, performance evaluation processes, client feedback surveys, etc.

2.0 Role of Victim Service Worker (cont'd.)

STANDARDS STATEMENT	PERFORMANCE INDICATORS
d. Provide Referrals Workers provide referrals to survivors. ***INTERPRETIVE GUIDELINES:*** *Referrals of the following kind are provided to survivors:* • *community agencies and counselling* • *legal services re civil remedies* • *additional community resources for ongoing benefit (e.g., women's centres, support groups, peer counselling networks, personal and family counsellors, mental health centres, native friendship centres)* • *psychologists approved by health benefits* • *appropriate federal or provincial corrections official.*	• worker demonstrates the knowledge and ability to provide survivors with appropriate referral information as outlined above through regular supervision (by peers or supervisor), case consultations, written reports, performance evaluation processes, client feedback surveys, etc.

2.0 Role of Victim Service Worker (cont'd.)

STANDARDS STATEMENT	PERFORMANCE INDICATORS
e. Maintain Client Files Workers maintain client files. ***INTERPRETIVE GUIDELINES:*** *Maintenance of client files may include the following activities:* • *noting required information on intake forms* • *keeping client files up to date* • *maintaining accurate statistical records, as required and as per Records Management Guidelines for the sector* • *reflecting current professional practice regarding collection/documentation of information as per Records Management Guidelines*	Maintenance of client files may include the following activities: • noting required information on intake forms • keeping client files up to date maintaining accurate statistical records, as required and as per Records Management Guidelines for the sector • reflecting current professional practice regarding collection/documentation of information as per Records Management Guidelines

2.0 Role of Victim Service Worker (cont'd.)

STANDARDS STATEMENT	PERFORMANCE INDICATORS
f. Maintain Positive Professional and Internal Staff Relations Workers operate under specific professional and organizational *include, but are not limited to the following:* • *adhering to agency expectations regarding* expectations. ***INTERPRETIVE GUIDELINES:*** *Professional and organizational expectations ethical practice* • *maintaining appropriate worker/client boundaries set by the agency* • *operating within agency policy* • *displaying sound judgment* • *acting as a team player and working independently*	• relationships with peers and supervisors are collaborative and effective • worker operates in an ethical and professional manner

3.0 Crisis Response/Intervention Services

(Applicable only to SVAP programs which provide Crisis Services.)

PRINCIPLE: The goal of the service at the crisis intervention stage is to lessen the impact of the crime on survivors and to reduce their immediate stress reaction. This is done by providing survivors with the full range of practical assistance and emotional support required immediately following the trauma, and helping them begin to regain a sense of control over their lives.

INTENT: To ensure that the immediate physical, emotional, safety and other practical needs of a person who has been assaulted or abused are provided for effectively in a sensitive and holistic manner.

STANDARDS STATEMENT	PERFORMANCE INDICATORS
3.1 The program provides crisis intervention support, which includes: • assistance with immediate physical safety concerns • support to get medical assessment/attention • provision of emotional support • supporting survivor to define own needs • allowance for expression and validation of feelings • assessment of the degree of stress • help in identifying most immediate problem and identifying options • preparing the survivor for what lies ahead regarding their emotional reactions to the trauma • explanation of medical and police procedures • helping with planning for immediate and ongoing needs, including safety planning • arrangement of friend or family to attend survivor, if appropriate	• documented evidence in crisis intervention/intake report and/or client file • evidence in client feedback (verbal or written)
3.2 Survivors are supported in gaining access to medical care, shelter and food.	• documented in crisis intervention/intake report and/or client file

3.0 Crisis Response/Intervention Services (cont'd.)

(Applicable only to SVAP programs which provide Crisis Services.)

STANDARDS STATEMENT	PERFORMANCE INDICATORS
3.3 Emergency referrals or direct assistance are provided, as needed, for clothing, finances, child care/protection, transportation, protection through temporary restraining orders, etc.	• documented in crisis intervention/intake report and/or client file
3.4 Intake at the crisis intervention stage involves the following: a. Assessing risk, immediate danger, safety needs, requirement for medical attention, emotional state, etc. b. Taking information regarding the assault/abuse, and providing information to the survivor regarding the recovery process, medical/legal/police procedures, etc. c. Identifying/ensuring a support system for the survivor d. Assessing survivor's requirements for shelter, finances and any other immediate needs.	• written policy and/or procedures outlining the crisis intervention intake process for the program • evidence of use of the intake process at the time of crisis intervention

4.0 Emotional Support and General Advocacy Services

PRINCIPLE: Emotional support is required following the trauma of victimization to assist the survivor in responding to the traumatic event and to facilitate healing.

Advocacy involves assisting the survivor with the realities of the medical, police and justice systems and in dealing with other practical concerns which are related. It involves providing information to persons the program serves (e.g., concerning their rights, available community resources, etc.) and supporting them emotionally.

INTENT: To provide the emotional support, information and advocacy services necessary to assist survivors in the healing process and help them deal with the effects of the crime on their lives.

STANDARDS STATEMENT	PERFORMANCE INDICATORS
4.1 a. Support services are provided according to the survivor's needs throughout the criminal prosecution process and follow-up. Depending upon available resources, support may continue for the duration of a civil suit, criminal injury compensation appeal, parole, etc. b. Service may be restarted at any point in time, if the crisis is renewed due to a triggering event. ***INTERPRETIVE GUIDELINES:*** *Emotional support and advocacy are provided in response to the survivor's identified needs and as agreed by the survivor and the program worker. As those needs change, the agreement for program services is revisited and may be changed by mutual decision between them.*	• evidence that the survivor's needs are considered in discussion both at the outset and throughout the support process (i.e., in intake report and/or client file)

4.0 Emotional Support and General Advocacy Services (cont'd.)

STANDARDS STATEMENT	PERFORMANCE INDICATORS
4.2 Emotional support provided to survivors throughout their involvement with the program includes: • clear and sensitive explanation of the boundaries of the client - support worker relationship • ongoing availability and provision of support • support to accept and explore feelings • assistance in identifying strengths and coping mechanisms • supporting empowerment of the survivor • validation of the signs of recovery	• evidence through periodic observation/supervision of worker/client relationships • evidence in client feedback surveys
4.3 General advocacy services provided by the program may include: • assistance with Criminal Injuries Compensation applications • assistance with justice system issues • landlord, employer or other agency intervention, if related to the survivor's victimization (e.g., the source of the victimization) • liaison with hospitals, medical and mental health professionals • support in gaining fair access to program providing protective relocation or shelter • assistance with safety plan, including recruitment of supportive individuals and programs • translator services, if applicable and available	• documented evidence in client files of actions taken

4.0 Emotional Support and General Advocacy Services (cont'd.)

STANDARDS STATEMENT	PERFORMANCE INDICATORS
4.4 General information and referral services provided by the program includes, as necessary: • general information on violent crime and victimization, including Victims of Crime Act • victimization information specific to the crime survived • information on violence prevention • general information on criminal justice system • appropriate referrals to all available social services • appropriate legal referrals	• documented evidence that the above information has been provided to each client, and referrals given, as required

5.0 Support Services During Criminal Justice Investigation

PRINCIPLE: Support during the criminal investigation is critical in helping those who have been victimized to avoid re-victimization through their involvement with the justice system. In dealing with the system, it is common for survivors to feel fear, confusion, anger and frustration. Support is intended to help survivors cope with these reactions and assist them in interacting with the system.

INTENT: To ensure survivors receive the support required in their initial dealings with the justice system.

STANDARDS STATEMENT	PERFORMANCE INDICATORS
5.1 The program provides emotional support at this stage, which includes, but is not limited to: • ongoing support for victimization issues • development/revision of safety plan • debriefing of reaction to arrest/charges • validation and response(s) re fears of retaliation	• evidence through periodic observation/supervision of worker/client relationships • evidence in client feedback surveys evidence in worker's log of activities or client files
5.2 The program provides advocacy services and practical assistance at this stage, which include: • assistance getting copies of orders • liaison or accompaniment to meetings with police, Crown, etc. • assistance with victim impact estimates; restitution information	• documented evidence in client files of actions taken

5.0 Support Services During Criminal Justice Investigation (cont'd.)

STANDARDS STATEMENT	PERFORMANCE INDICATORS
5.3 The program provides information and referral services at this stage, which could include, but is not limited to: • information on functions of the criminal justice system • information regarding the roles of criminal justice system representatives (e.g., police, special investigation units, Crown counsel, VWS, coroner, defense counsel, probation officers) • explanation of process from first appearance to preliminary hearing (e.g., charge, first appearance, interim release, plea, election, preliminary hearing, plea discussions) • explanation of rights regarding the Victim Impact Statement • definition of arrest, rights of the accused • information on the specific charges • information on how and where to attend court • updates on court case progress • information about probation • information on release conditions, who to contact re changes, how to report breaches • referral to legal services re civil remedies • referral to Crown counsel for reasons for charges	• documented evidence that the above information has been provided to each client, and referrals given, as required

6.0 Support Services During Prosecution

PRINCIPLE: It is common for survivors to feel nervousness, anxiety, fear, frustration and/or confusion prior to going to court. They may be particularly frightened of seeing the parties involved and anxious about recalling the details of the event. This stage is designed to assist survivors in going through the court process, and includes court orientation and accompaniment, where requested.

INTENT: To prepare the survivor for their role in the court process, to help alleviate their anxiety about participating and to support them in the court process. (N.B. In some communities this service is provided by the Courtwork Program.)

STANDARDS STATEMENT	PERFORMANCE INDICATORS
6.1 The program provides emotional support at this stage, which includes but is not limited to: • ongoing support for victimization issues • supporting survivors to communicate in court the events of the victimization • providing a safe place for expressing feelings and frustrations • acknowledgment of fears/anxieties and discussion of strategies for dealing with them • discussion of strategies for coping with the process of testifying • information regarding the security precautions in court • debriefing after court appearance • support for secondary victims	• evidence through periodic observation/supervision of worker/client relationships • evidence in client feedback surveys • evidence in worker's log of activities or client files

6.0 Support Services During Prosecution (cont'd.)

STANDARDS STATEMENT	PERFORMANCE INDICATORS
6.2 The program provides advocacy services and practical assistance at this stage, as follows: • liaison with Crown re court orientation, evidence review interview and identifying outstanding issues discussion re applications for non-publication of victim's names or changes in court configuration • tour of court house, advise re location, parking, directions on arrival, waiting areas, washrooms, coffee shop • advise/arrange for toys, activities for young children • plan strategy for dealing with the media • court accompaniment, if requested • assistance with transportation to court, if necessary • intervention on behalf of survivor with employer or educational institution, if necessary	• documented evidence in client files of actions taken
6.3 The program provides information at this stage which includes, but is not limited to, the following: • explanation of standard security precautions taken in the courtroom • explanation of court procedures • discussion of role of Crown counsel • explanation of concept of innocent until proven guilty, presumption of innocence • explanation of levels of court • discussion regarding possible outcomes • reminder not to discuss testimony with other witnesses	• documented evidence of information provided to each client

6.0 Support Services During Prosecution (cont'd.)

STANDARDS STATEMENT	PERFORMANCE INDICATORS
6.4 The program provides court orientation at this stage, as follows: • may view video "Being a Witness" • brief the victim/witness on the roles of Crown counsel, defense counsel, judge, jury, sheriff, court clerk • outline witness responsibilities and rights • outline acceptable courtroom behaviour and attire • explaining the difference between direct examination, cross examination, and re-examination • reminder that cross-examination is part of the job of acting for the accused • inform of oaths and affirmations • explain concept of proof beyond reasonable doubt • advise on knowing when to leave the witness stand, whether to stay after testifying	• documented evidence that the above information has been provided to each client
6.5 Every attempt is made to ensure a safe place is available for survivors and witnesses separate from the accused and defense witnesses.	• documented evidence of actions taken

7.0 Support Services Before and After Case Disposition

PRINCIPLE: The end of court does not necessarily signify resolution for the survivor. Reliving the crime during the court case may bring up feelings of anger, fear and grief. If the outcome of the case is not what the survivor desired, additional emotional support may well be needed.

INTENT: To help the person who has been victimized to understand the case outcome and to exercise their rights.

STANDARDS STATEMENT	PERFORMANCE INDICATORS
7.1 The program provides the survivor with information on all victim rights in the aftermath of case disposition.	• documented evidence that the above information has been provided to each client
7.2 The program provides emotional support at this stage, as follows: • debriefing reaction to case outcome and prepare for reaction to possible sentences • debriefing of feelings/reactions to sentencing • listening and validation of feelings • encouragement to reach out for additional assistance (e.g., counselling) • discussion of other possible options available (e.g., civil suit) • ongoing follow-up, if difficulty dealing with the outcome	• evidence through periodic observation/supervision of worker/client relationships • evidence in client feedback surveys • evidence in worker's log of activities or client files
7.3 The program provides advocacy services and practical assistance at this stage, as follows: • check with Crown re use of Victim Impact Statement (VIS), confirm if survivor required at sentencing • accompaniment to sentencing, if requested • accompaniment/transportation to hearings, if requested • assistance with completion of Corrections "Request for Information Form"	• documented evidence in client files of actions taken

7.0 Support Services Before and After Case Disposition (cont'd.)

STANDARDS STATEMENT	PERFORMANCE INDICATORS
7.4 The program provides information and referrals at this stage, as follows: • information regarding sentencing • explanation of meaning of acquittal • preparation re possibility of testifying on statements in the VIS • information about victim's discretionary rights under provincial and federal legislation to certain information about and input regarding the convicted offender (e.g., VIS, sentencing and parole information, etc.) • explanation of provincial or federal corrections systems • information about role of parole boards • referral to community resources for ongoing support • referral to appropriate federal or provincial corrections officials	• documented evidence that the above information has been provided to each client, and referrals given, as required

8.0 Availability of Services

PRINCIPLE: The hours of operation of the service is an important component of its accessibility to survivors. See also Section 9.0 Accessibility.

INTENT: To ensure that program services are available to persons who have been victimized.

STANDARDS STATEMENT	PERFORMANCE INDICATORS
Immediate Crisis Intervention Response (where applicable) 8.1 a. The program provides 24 hour a day access to a trained program worker or information regarding access to other crisis/emergency resources available outside office hours. b. When on duty, the program worker responds to the caller by telephone within thirty minutes of the call. ***INTERPRETIVE GUIDELINES:*** *This standard is to ensure that, where applicable, emergency services are available to persons in crisis. In some situations, the program is unable to provide 24 hour service due to limited funding/staffing. In such cases, local arrangements with other services in the community ensure that 24 hour coverage is accessible.*	This standard is to ensure that, where applicable, emergency services are available to persons in crisis. In some situations, the program is unable to provide 24 hour service due to limited funding/staffing. In such cases, local arrangements with other services in the community ensure that 24 hour coverage is accessible.

8.0 Availability of Services (cont'd.)

STANDARDS STATEMENT	PERFORMANCE INDICATORS
All Other Services 8.2 Services are made available to the greatest extent possible, within the program's financial and human resources, and at times that ensure maximum possible access for survivors. ***INTERPRETIVE GUIDELINES:*** • *hours of operation documented and communicated publicly* • *evidence that attempts are made to operate at times that allow the maximum flexible availability to survivors (e.g., evenings, weekends, school hours)*	• hours of operation documented and communicated publicly • evidence that attempts are made to operate at times that allow the maximum flexible availability to survivors (e.g., evenings, weekends, school hours)
8.3 The program has strategies to ensure that those who walk in requiring immediate response are provided with immediate support and/or referral. ***INTERPRETIVE GUIDELINES:*** *This standard is to give maximum support to persons in crisis who walk in off the street during business hours. Regular appointments with survivors are generally scheduled in advance. This means that workers are not always immediately available to meet with people who walk in. The program should ensure that every attempt is made to identify persons requiring immediate assistance, and get support to them as quickly as possible.*	• procedures are in place to identify a person in need of immediate assistance and provide assistance, when necessary (e.g., program worker available or referral made to an alternate crisis service) • if a referral is made, the survivor is provided with assistance in reaching the referral, if necessary

9.0 Accessibility

PRINCIPLE: Specialized Victim Assistance programs are inclusive, and incorporate active measures to reduce the impact of barriers and thereby increase accessibility of services for all survivors.

SVAP's recognize that persons who have been marginalized often face additional barriers to seeking services on assault/abuse issues. Although barriers may differ from one community to another, they are likely to include one or more of the following: language differences, racism (particularly for First Nations and people of colour), ageism, heterosexism and homophobia, ableism, physical/structural limitations, illiteracy, unemployment, low incomes/poverty, lack of transportation, limited hours of operation and mandates, lack of due process, funding limits, prejudicial attitudes, etc.

INTENT: To ensure that program services will be accessible and hospitable to all survivors, including those who have been marginalized by the dominant culture and therefore face additional barriers.

STANDARDS STATEMENT	PERFORMANCE INDICATORS
9.1 The agency has a policy stipulating its commitment to accessibility.	• agency policy regarding accessibility of the program for all survivors
9.2 The agency takes active measures to remove barriers to the program and increase program accessibility for all.	• actions taken to improve accessibility are documented and clearly demonstrate commitment to ensuring that the program is accessible and welcoming to all survivors • evidence of further actions planned to address identified barriers to accessibility, with associated timelines that reflect commitment to improving accessibility

INTERPRETIVE GUIDELINES: *The agency is actively involved in a process to remove barriers of all kinds to the program, so that all survivors may have ready and equal access to the program. Barriers likely to require attention include:* • *language differences and illiteracy* • *sexism* • *racism* • *architectural barriers including barriers to persons with visual and hearing impairments* • *ableism and other barriers to people with disabilities* • *ageism* • *heterosexism and homophobia* • *attitudinal barriers* • *unemployment* • *poverty and low incomes* • *lack of transportation* *Sample strategies (i.e., active measures) the agency might take include:* • *policies adopted by the Board of Directors or Collective* • *personnel policies* • *employment equity plans* • *outreach staff and volunteer recruitment activities* • *training activities for staff and volunteers (e.g., training in cultural diversity and anti-oppression)* • *outreach to community agencies serving specific populations (e.g., aboriginal bands, multicultural organizations, organizations supporting persons with disabilities, etc.)* • *advocacy activities* • *client-based plans and activities (e.g., posters that are inclusive and visually welcoming, brochures in different languages, availability of interpreters, delivery of services in central, wheelchair accessible locations, assistance with needed child care and transportation costs)* • *continuous review and improvement of program accessibility*	

9.0 Accessibility (cont'd.)

STANDARDS STATEMENT	PERFORMANCE INDICATORS
9.3 Where additional costs would be incurred to reduce barriers, and where such costs are beyond the capacity of the organization: a. The program attempts to find other ways of addressing the barrier. b. The program develops a referral system so that persons to be served may utilize other resources that are accessible and receptive. ***INTERPRETIVE GUIDELINES:*** *The program does not have to be completely architecturally and otherwise accessible, but services should be readily available at alternative sites or by other means, to the greatest extent possible.*	• alternative sites used are accessible and welcoming • documentation of referrals made when, because of barriers, the program cannot accommodate survivors who are eligible for service
9.4 Within available resources, the agency ensures that program staff are knowledgeable about how to effectively serve diverse populations. See also Section 18.0 Human Resource Management, Standard 18.9. c. ***INTERPRETIVE GUIDELINES:*** *It is important that program staff have an understanding of sensitive and effective ways to serve diverse populations and are aware of how their own attitudes and values can affect survivors using the program.*	• program materials for diversity training are available to staff • evidence of diversity orientation/training provided within the first year of hiring to those new staff with no previous training/experience in diversity • other training, specified in the accessibility plan, is carried out

9.0 Accessibility (cont'd.)

STANDARDS STATEMENT	PERFORMANCE INDICATORS
9.5 If the program is open to serving people under the age of 19, a policy exists related to providing service to this population. ***INTERPRETIVE GUIDELINES:*** *Because of the additional legal issues involved in serving youth, the program should stipulate the parameters surrounding how and when it will provide services to young people under 19 years of age.*	• policy in place relating to program service to youth • the policy is consistent with principles outlined in the Records Management Guidelines for the sector

10.0 Intake, Assessment and Orientation

PRINCIPLE: SVAP program intake and assessment is a mutual process, which provides an opportunity for the program to determine whether eligibility criteria are met, and for the person victimized to assess whether the program is likely to be of assistance.

The intake process outlined below is used where a survivor chooses to become involved with the SVAP program for more extended contact. In many cases, where contact is of a very brief nature, and the person is seeking either immediate assistance or inquiring about the program, the following intake process would not be suitable. See earlier section on Crisis Intervention (Section 3.0) for related intake procedures, including after hours.

The intake process is simple, respectful, confidential and is conducted in a way that is empowering to the survivor. Intake is commenced in a timely manner, and includes consideration for the person's immediate safety.

INTENT: To ensure that survivors are able to make an informed choice about participating in the program and are served with minimum delay. The intake process is designed to ensure that each person receives services most appropriate to the particular needs they identify.

10.0 Intake, Assessment and Orientation (cont'd.)

STANDARDS STATEMENT	PERFORMANCE INDICATORS
Intake 10.1 The program has a clearly written policy outlining eligibility criteria consistent with the mandate and capabilities (i.e., financial and human resources) of the program, and describing procedures for prioritizing intake. ***INTERPRETIVE GUIDELINES:*** *It is important for the program to be clear about which persons it is mandated to serve. Clearly defined eligibility criteria help to minimize subjectivity in determining if the program is applicable to the needs of a person seeking service. These criteria can also assist survivors in assessing if the program is right for them.* *If people are waiting for service in the program, the program needs to have criteria for selecting the order in which they will receive service, such as a triage system to respond first to those in crisis or critical need.*	• eligibility criteria are clearly defined and in writing • criteria for the order of selection of persons awaiting service are clearly outlined in writing

10.0 Intake, Assessment and Orientation (cont'd.)

STANDARDS STATEMENT	PERFORMANCE INDICATORS
10.2 a. A mutual intake and assessment process exists. b. A safety assessment is done with the survivor at intake, and a safety plan established. c. Caution is exercised at intake in Documenting confidential client information. d. The intake process recognizes and Respects the fact that survivors may be reluctant or unable to disclose some or all of their experiences. ***INTERPRETIVE GUIDELINES:*** *The intake process is a two-way interaction in which the survivor and program worker explore if and how the program can be of assistance. It is deeply respectful of the experience and needs of survivors and considers their immediate safety.*	• evidence that the intake process has considered the survivor's eligibility and the program's ability to respond • evidence during intake of the survivor's choice to participate • safety assessment completed and safety plan in place • Records Management Guidelines for the sector are followed regarding collecting and release of client information • signed consent forms, related to release of client information, are used when appropriate • survivors have the freedom to disclose information to their own comfort level
10.3 Procedures are in place for handling a waiting list, if one exists. ***INTERPRETIVE GUIDELINES:*** *If a waiting list is used, the program needs to establish a process for actively reviewing and keeping the list current, so that is can be used effectively.*	• information on the list adequately identifies persons awaiting service and their needs • wait list is reviewed periodically, review date is documented • review of the list may include contacting those awaiting service

10.0 Intake, Assessment and Orientation (cont'd.)

STANDARDS STATEMENT	PERFORMANCE INDICATORS
10.3 a. There is evidence that the program is aware of the scope of community resources and services available to meet the needs of persons who have been victimized. b. If, at intake, it is determined that the person's need for service is beyond the capacity of the program or outside the program mandate, the program refers the person to appropriate services elsewhere. c. In making referrals to other services, local referral protocol agreements are respected. d. If appropriate resources are not available or accessible, the program may, with the person's informed consent, provide limited service intended to avert a crisis or reduce the possibility of further harm. ***INTERPRETIVE GUIDELINES:*** *Referral to other community resources is an ongoing process, which may begin at intake, whether or not the person comes into the program, and continues throughout the whole time the survivor receives service.* *Program staff need to be aware of the range of resources available in the community and to be able to make useful referrals, where appropriate and/or necessary.*	• community resource directory or lists of referral resources available to program staff, and where applicable, to volunteers • documentation of all referrals made and the reason(s) for them • referrals comply with local protocol agreements, where applicable • documentation of any services provided to ineligible persons, including the rationale for why service was provided

10.0 Intake, Assessment and Orientation (cont'd.)

STANDARDS STATEMENT	PERFORMANCE INDICATORS
Orientation 10.4 a. Orientation of those served by the program begins at intake, and will extend over the course of the first few sessions together, responding to the particular situation and individual needs of survivors. b. Orientation is conducted in a way that is clear and understandable to those being served. c. Clear procedures are in place for orientation and are followed consistently with each client. Orientation includes: • identification of the victim support worker and her role • information regarding how the program operates • the mission, programs and services of the organization, as appropriate • clear communication regarding clients' rights and responsibilities (verbal and/or written) • information regarding complaint procedures • information about other relevant agency/program policies and procedures (e.g., re safety, confidentiality) • information about confidentiality and exceptions to confidentiality (e.g., cases of suspected child abuse, suicidal or homicidal threats, court orders)	• documentation that orientation is proceeding during the first few sessions • evidence that the survivor's needs are being considered in the process • where survivors have difficulty reading English, there is evidence to show that every attempt has been made to provide written orientation information in their primary language or to have an interpreter available to assist • orientation procedures are in writing and include the items listed above • documentation in the service record that the full orientation process has been completed with each client

10.0 Intake, Assessment and Orientation (cont'd.)

INTERPRETIVE GUIDELINES: *Orientation is important to survivors' understanding of what will happen while they are receiving service, to their feeling of comfort with the program and to their involvement in the process. At the same time, the process of orientation must always be client-centred, sensitive to the needs of each individual.*	

11.0 Individual Planning

PRINCIPLE: Planning for responsive service to those who have been victimized is an evolving process, one continually in flux, as it depends upon the changing situation and needs of the survivor. The SVAP support process provides an opportunity for survivors to explore the impact violence has had on their lives, and to develop strategies to address the issues identified in collaboration with SVAP support staff.

The standards below refer to situations that involve more extended contact with program participants. Again, service planning is not possible where there is only brief contact of a crisis nature. Instead, in these latter situations, immediate response to the crisis is paramount.

INTENT: To ensure that the program is responsive to the needs of survivors, that those using the SVAP program are continually involved in assessing options and determining the kinds of supports to be provided, building on their strengths, needs, abilities and preferences.

11.0 Individual Planning (cont'd.)

STANDARDS STATEMENT	PERFORMANCE INDICATORS
11.1 a. The SVAP worker and the survivor collaborate in an initial exploration of what the survivor wants from the program, and how and to what extent services might be able to address the survivor's needs. b. Individual needs for service are reviewed regularly with the survivor, to ensure that immediate and emerging needs are being addressed, as they surface. c, Written records concerning service provision are developed and kept in accordance with agency policy and Records Management Guidelines for the sector. ***INTERPRETIVE GUIDELINES:*** *Individual planning recognizes that a survivor's self-identified goals may change over time. Referrals to other resources appropriate to the survivor's needs are given in consultation with the survivor, as the need arises. Planning and reassessment are undertaken and documented in a manner which protects the privacy of the survivor.*	• documented evidence of collaboration and client's choices for service • documented evidence of periodic re-assessment of services provided • client records comply with Records Management Guidelines

11.0 Individual Planning (cont'd.)

STANDARDS STATEMENT	PERFORMANCE INDICATOR
11.2 Procedures exist to ensure that the services provided to survivors address needs and issues they specify and support their empowerment. ***INTERPRETIVE GUIDELINES:*** *SVAP workers foster survivor self-empowerment by supporting survivors toward increased control over their lives, exploring options, and reducing the power differential between the support worker and the survivor.*	• practices in place related to responsiveness to client needs and empowerment of survivors • evidence of responsiveness to client needs and support for self-empowerment in client feedback forms
11.3 Procedures are in place for considering service, within program capabilities, that is sensitive to cultural, social, economic, educational, psychological, physical and spiritual factors. ***INTERPRETIVE GUIDELINES:*** *In order for survivors to feel welcome and as comfortable as possible in the program, sensitivity to cultural, social, economic, etc. factors is essential.*	• staff orientation/training in diversity • documented evidence that above issues are discussed at intake

12.0 Referral and Conclusion of Service

PRINCIPLE: It is anticipated that, in many cases, the program will be unable to meet the range of needs identified by persons served. In such cases, program staff will make every effort to ensure that survivors are aware of related community resources and to provide appropriate referrals to help the survivor address their needs. Referral is an ongoing process, and may occur through the duration of time a survivor is involved with the SVAP program. Client choice regarding the use of referrals is respected and supported by the program.

The program operates on the principle that survivors generally know when it is time for them to conclude service. Whenever possible, the program will assist those served in concluding service in the way that works best for them, while at the same time operating within the boundaries of program capacity. However, because some people leave the program without giving notice (i.e., due to family demands, re-location, illness, changed circumstances, etc.); it is not always possible to have discussions about conclusion within the service context.

INTENT: To ensure that persons served by the program are referred, when appropriate, to additional services beyond the scope of the program that could potentially be useful to them and that, wherever possible, plans are made for the appropriate conclusion of service.

12.0 Referral and Conclusion of Service (cont'd.)

STANDARDS STATEMENT	PERFORMANCE INDICATORS
12.1 a. Procedures are in place to refer those whose needs cannot be fully addressed by the program to appropriate community resources elsewhere. b. Referrals are made in collaboration with the survivor, ensuring the person's full knowledge of and consent to the referral and understanding of reasons for the referral. ***INTERPRETIVE GUIDELINES:*** *Referral to other community resources is an ongoing process. The need for referrals may be identified at intake (See Section 10, Intake, Assessment and Orientation Standard 10.4), while service is being provided by the program, and/or at the time of service conclusion.* *Program staff need to be aware of the range of resources available in the community and to be able to make useful referrals, where appropriate and/or necessary.*	• community resource directory or lists of referral resources available to program staff, and where applicable, to volunteers • evidence of discussion with the survivor regarding any referral • documentation of all referrals made and the reason(s) for them • referrals comply with local protocol agreements, where applicable

12.0 Referral and Conclusion of Service (cont'd.)

STANDARDS STATEMENT	PERFORMANCE INDICATORS
12.2 a. Where applicable, information and/or materials transmitted to other individuals or agencies concerning a person served by the program will be limited only to what is necessary and has been authorized by the survivor. b. Subject to conditions regarding exceptions to confidentiality (e.g., cases of suspected child abuse, suicidal or homicidal threats, court orders), and to operational requirements of the program, the program will respect any and all other limitations set by the person served regarding the transmission of personal information. c. Release forms, signed by the survivor, will be used to identify to whom client information may be released, limits to the release of specific information and, if appropriate, within what time period.	• either release form(s) signed by clients, or notes documenting client consent to release information, are on file • release forms identify, at minimum: - the name of the client - to whom information may be released - nature/limits of content to be released, if appropriate - the date the authorization expires - the signature of the client - the date the release is signed

12.0 Referral and Conclusion of Service (cont'd.)

INTERPRETIVE GUIDELINES: *The underlying principle of this standard is respect for and the protection of the survivor's privacy. This means that, apart from the exceptional circumstances outlined in the standard, personal information about clients will only be shared when required for purposes of client advocacy or for other operational requirements (see below), and only when permission has been given by the client. Release of personal client information should be done with the full knowledge of the survivor. (See also Section 14.0 Client Confidentiality, Standard 14.2)* *The terminology, operational requirements of the program , referenced in Standard 12.2 (b) above, refers only to case management and staff supervision. Every attempt is made to protect the identity of the client in such discussions. In situations where client identity needs to be revealed for effective discussion, all participants shall be subject to standard confidentiality procedures.* *Consent should be documented and should specify any limits to the information to be transmitted. To conform to this standard, the consent form(s) must indicate each individual or agency with whom information may be shared, and must either be signed by the client, or in extenuating circumstances where written consent is not practical or possible, a note must be placed on file indicating that verbal consent has been granted. The intent of this standard is that, if the agency is providing any information that identifies a survivor who is receiving service, it should have the authorization to do so.*	

12.0 Referral and Conclusion of Service (cont'd.)

STANDARDS STATEMENT	PERFORMANCE INDICATORS
Service Conclusion 12.3 a. Wherever possible, a decision to conclude service is made jointly, and results from discussion between the SVAP worker and the survivor over a period of time. ***INTERPRETIVE GUIDELINES:*** *The program supports survivors to conclude service at a time and in a way that works best for each person individually. Although not always possible, it is preferable when this involves thorough discussion between the survivor and the worker, which includes consideration of what additional community supports may be needed upon leaving.*	• evidence of discussion with the survivor to conclude service • documentation of referrals made at service conclusion
12.4 In situations where program staff must make a unilateral decision to conclude service, the person served will be informed immediately, and the reason for service conclusion documented. ***INTERPRETIVE GUIDELINES*** *Under certain circumstances (e.g. program services have been exhausted), it may be necessary for program staff to make a decision to conclude service in the absence of the client. Respect for the individual dictates the need to inform the survivor, whenever possible, of the decision in a sensitive and timely way.*	• staff decisions to conclude service and the reasons are documented in the survivor's file

12.0 Referral and Conclusion of Service (cont'd.)

STANDARDS STATEMENT	PERFORMANCE INDICATORS
12.5 Wherever possible, all persons leaving the program are: a. assisted with information and referrals to other community resources, as needed and appropriate, b. informed that future service will be available, as required. ***INTERPRETIVE GUIDELINES:*** *On leaving the program, a survivor may require additional support from other community resources. The process of concluding service takes the need for further referrals into consideration. In addition, it is important for clients to know they can return to the program at some point in the future, if necessary.*	• documentation of referrals made at service conclusion and client informed of the availability of future service

13.0 Quality of Service, Planning and Evaluation

PRINCIPLE: Agencies providing SVAP services are responsible for ensuring that persons who have experienced sexual assault or physical abuse have access to the best possible quality of service. The program helps survivors address issues related to the impact of the trauma they have experienced in a manner which best suits their individual needs and preferences. The program focuses on the survivor's recovery and actively supports survivors to make their own decisions throughout the process.

To promote quality service, the agency creates a welcoming and supportive environment which enhances SVAP service delivery, and has systems that provide for ongoing monitoring and evaluation of the quality of the service. This includes assessing the relationship between the needs and preferences of survivors and the services provided.

INTENT: To promote client satisfaction through ongoing program planning and evaluation which support the delivery of quality services and by ensuring that survivors are treated in a manner which is empathic, respectful, holistic, participative and focused on wellness and provides a sense of partnership and shared ownership of the support relationship.

13.0 **Quality of Service, Planning and Evaluation** (cont'd.)

STANDARDS STATEMENT	PERFORMANCE INDICATORS
13.1 a. The agency has measures in place to evaluate the quality and appropriateness of program services that include soliciting feedback, where possible, from survivors who have used the program, both during and following the service delivery period. b. Mechanisms used for feedback from survivors will not in any way jeopardize client confidentiality or safety. ***INTERPRETIVE GUIDELINES:*** *The agency should have control of any process it might undertake to review the quality and appropriateness of program services.* *Agencies can accomplish these reviews through periodic supervision and case review, a system of peer review, and/or the use of an outside evaluator. A staff member should not be the sole reviewer of services for which she is responsible.* *Materials used in the review are likely to include client feedback forms and satisfaction surveys and other internal measures of quality such as program availability, accessibility, referral processes, etc.* *Suggestions offered by the reviewers may or may not be accepted by the program/agency.*	• consideration of the survivor's ongoing needs was respectful, thorough and timely • services provided were based on the needs identified by the survivor • survivors were actively involved in planning and making their own informed decisions regarding services they received

13.0 Quality of Service, Planning and Evaluation (cont'd.)

STANDARDS STATEMENT	PERFORMANCE INDICATORS
13.2 Procedures are in place to gain useful feedback on the program periodically from community referral agencies. ***INTERPRETIVE GUIDELINES:*** *Community referral agencies have valuable knowledge about the program's effectiveness and accessibility. Opportunities to offer feedback foster good working relations between agencies.*	• evidence that feedback on the program is sought informally from community referral agencies (e.g., through various interagency meetings, forums, etc.)
13.3 The agency demonstrates that, where issues or gaps have been identified, the information collected is integrated into the ongoing planning process and is used to improve the quality of service provided by the program. ***INTERPRETIVE GUIDELINES:*** *The agency should be able to show how information from periodic reviews has been utilized for program improvement.*	• evidence that problems identified by reviews have been considered in the annual planning process for the program • documented examples of where recommendations from reviews have been adopted and the results of having taken such measures (i.e., from monitoring implementation of the annual plan)
13.4 Any changes in the program are made in consultation with staff and volunteers, and, where applicable, persons served, funders and/or other community agencies. The nature and extent of consultation is determined by the level of change under consideration.	• documented evidence of consultations regarding changes under consideration (e.g., meeting minutes, etc.)

13.0 Quality of Service, Planning and Evaluation (cont'd.)

STANDARDS STATEMENT	PERFORMANCE INDICATORS
13.5 Statistics are maintained, without names, on persons served by the program, and on referrals to other programs/services, for use in determining trends, tracking referral patterns and assisting with future planning. ***INTERPRETIVE GUIDELINES:*** *Statistics are maintained on program clients as required by contract with the Ministry of Attorney General as the funding body. Statistics on those the program refers should be kept as simply as possible in order to be used effectively for longer term planning processes.*	• regular program statistical reports to the ministry • evidence that statistical reports are used in the annual planning process

14.0 Client Confidentiality

PRINCIPLE: The SAC/WAC requires information from persons served as part of the joint planning process in providing effective service to survivors. The program makes every attempt to keep information provided by survivors confidential. There are some circumstances, however, under which program staff may be required to release confidential information. The program has a responsibility to inform persons served as early as possible regarding confidentiality provisions and exceptions, (see Section 10.0 Intake, Assessment and Orientation, Standard 10.5 Orientation).

Clients have a right to access all information to which they are entitled.

INTENT: To preserve the protection of client confidentiality.

STANDARDS STATEMENT	PERFORMANCE INDICATORS
14.1 a. Policies and procedures are in place to protect client confidentiality and are adhered to by volunteers, staff, Board members, and all others associated with the program and the agency. b. Policies regarding client confidentiality are reviewed regularly, and updated, as needed. ***INTERPRETIVE GUIDELINES:*** *The intent of this standard is to ensure respect for and the protection of the survivor's privacy to the greatest extent possible. In addition to specific policies, agencies may wish to have all those associated with the program and the agency sign an oath of confidentiality.*	• documented policies and procedures in writing which protect personal information related to clients of the program • evidence that policies are adhered to by all those associated with the agency • evidence that client confidentiality policies are reviewed and updated as need (e.g., policies and revisions are dated)

14.0 Client Confidentiality (cont'd.)

STANDARDS STATEMENT	PERFORMANCE INDICATORS
14.2 a. Personal client information, including that in client records, will be disclosed only under the following circumstances: • to those persons specified by the client, and • where operationally required in the performance of duties associated with the program, and only for a purpose consistent with that for which the information was compiled b. The only exceptions to part (a) of the standard where client information may be released are: • where legally required by court order, or • in cases of suspected child abuse, or • for the protection of the health and safety of the client or others. c. A process is in place for survivors to acknowledge their agreement with the exceptions to confidentiality.	• performance indicators for Standard 12.2 apply here • signed consent showing the survivor's understanding of and agreement to the exceptions to confidentiality • evidence that the survivor is informed before personal information is released

14.0 Client Confidentiality (cont'd.)

INTERPRETIVE GUIDELINES: *Apart from the exceptional circumstances outlined in the standard, personal information about clients will only be shared when required for purposes of client advocacy or for other operational requirements (see below), and only when permission has been given by the client. Release of personal client information should be done with the full knowledge of the survivor. (See also Section 12.0, Referral and Conclusion of Service, Standard 12.2)* *The terminology, operational requirements of the program , referenced above, refers only to case management, staff supervision and file review for the purposes of program evaluation. Every attempt is made to protect the identity of the client in such discussions. In situations where client identity needs to be revealed for effective discussion, all participants shall be subject to standard confidentiality procedures.*	

14.0 Client Confidentiality (cont'd.)

STANDARDS STATEMENT	PERFORMANCE INDICATORS
14.3 a. The agency establishes policies and procedures regarding the management of client records. b. Appropriate safeguards are in place to protect confidential client records. c. The agency exercises caution in developing forms and documenting information so that they do not pose future harm to the person served. ***INTERPRETIVE GUIDELINES:*** *The agency must ensure that it is taking every precaution in how it develops and handles confidential client records. Policies and procedures should be consistent with suggestions outlined in the Records Management Guidelines developed by the sector. These include, but are not limited to creation, storage, retention, closure and disposal of client records.*	• policies and procedures (e.g., written guidelines) related to the management of client records are consistent with recommendations in the Record Management Guidelines • client records are kept under lock and key and/or securely on computer
14.4 Policies and procedures ensure that those served by the program have a clearly defined right of access to their records and are informed of this.	• written policy with procedures indicating clients' right of access to their records • documentation showing clients have been informed of this right
14.5 The agency has a policy indicating that staff and volunteers, where applicable, neither confirm nor divulge information to others relating to the fact that a particular individual is receiving service, unless a consent form is signed by that individual or unless compelled by court order. ***INTERPRETIVE GUIDELINES:*** *This standard is to further protect the privacy of survivors receiving service in the program.*	• written policy stating that staff will neither confirm nor divulge any information regarding a client receiving service in the program

14.0 Client Confidentiality (cont'd.)

STANDARDS STATEMENT	PERFORMANCE INDICATORS
14.6 The agency ensures, to the greatest extent possible within available resources, that the privacy of persons served by the program is protected through the use of private, soundproof space for interviewing/meeting. ***INTERPRETIVE GUIDELINES:*** *This standard is to further protect the privacy of survivors receiving service in the program.*	• where resources permit, private, soundproof space is available and used for interviewing/meeting with survivors

15.0 Services to Children

PRINCIPLE / INTENT: All children and children who are victims of violence and/or abuse require a specialized victim assistance program response which recognises their unique needs..

STANDARDS STATEMENT	PERFORMANCE INDICATORS
15.1 Workers are aware of the needs of children who are victims of violence.	• Victim Assistance Program Training provides workers with information on the needs and rights of children who are victims of violence • Workers are informed of their roles and responsibilities in relation to established protocols and legislation.
15.2 Workers follow established protocols defined by the Ministry for Children and Families/Victim services agencies in cases of child abuse and neglect.	• There is a written procedure which defines reporting parameters, requirements and structure for reporting in cases of child abuse and neglect •
15.3 Parent/guardian permission is required prior to providing services to minors.	• There is a written procedure for obtaining parental or guardian consent to minors • Where children are deemed to be a "mature minor", all client information is treated as confidential unless the client consents to having his/her parents informed. **The Ministry for Children and Families defines children as those under 19 years of age. ***A "mature minor" is a youth under 19 who is judged by the program, policy or agency to be mature, competent and able to provide consent to program services. There are no precise guidelines to use in the determination of a "mature minor". Factors to consider are: • the general maturity and intellectual capacity of the child • the child's ability to understand the program's nature and purpose • whether the child is dependent on parents or caregivers or is self supporting.

16.0 Resolution of Client Complaints

PRINCIPLE: Persons served by the program have the right to express their views and seek timely resolution of their concerns, when they are not satisfied with program services. The program ensures methods are in place for speedy resolution of client complaints.

INTENT: To respect the right of clients to be heard, to have access to all information to which they are entitled and to have complaints resolved in a timely manner.

STANDARDS STATEMENT	PERFORMANCE INDICATORS
16.1 a. The agency has written policy and procedures which outline the right of those served to register a complaint regarding any aspect of SVAP service or the agency as a whole. These are reviewed periodically, and updated, as needed. b. The agency has established methods for receiving and responding to complaints in a timely manner. c. Persons served by the program are notified of complaint procedures at the time of intake. (i.e., sometime during the first few sessions) ***INTERPRETIVE GUIDELINES:*** *The intent of this standard is to ensure that survivors understand they have the right to question the service they are receiving and that their complaints are handled respectfully, thoroughly and quickly.*	• written policy regarding clients' right to register a complaint • procedures for filing complaints and resolving the issues involved • evidence that survivors are informed at intake of their rights and procedures regarding complaints
16.2 Where client complaints identify justified areas for program improvement, appropriate changes are made by the agency.	• documented evidence of response to and/or action(s) taken on each complaint registered by a client

ORGANIZATIONAL QUALITY

17.0 Leadership

PRINCIPLE: The leadership of the agency and its programs is provided, at minimum, by the Board of Directors and designated management staff or Collective members. Many organizations operate with a shared leadership model, where leadership is distributed among all levels of the organization. [6] Whichever model is used, it is the responsibility of those parties providing leadership to give effective and efficient direction, so that the agency can achieve its mission and programs can meet the needs of those they are designed to serve.

Responsiveness to persons served should be reflected in the management practices of the agency and its program. The leadership adopts fair and equitable practices and ensures that the efficiency and effectiveness of its organizational structure is continually monitored.

INTENT: To ensure the provision of effective and ethical leadership within the organization, and that the agency has the resources and stability to achieve its stated mission.

STANDARDS STATEMENT	PERFORMANCE INDICATORS
17.1 The organizational structure is documented in written form and made available to people at all levels of the agency. It is included in the organization's management, staff and volunteer orientation.	• organizational chart for the agency • evidence that all management, staff and volunteers have a copy of the agency's organizational chart, or, at least, were introduced to it at their orientation
17.2 The roles and responsibilities of the Board of Directors, of management and/ of collective members, whichever are applicable, are clearly identified and defined in writing.	• written role descriptions for Board members • written job descriptions for management • where applicable, written job descriptions for collective members • the different responsibilities of Board/Collective members and of management are clearly identified •

[6] These organizations choose a shared leadership style intentionally, in order to reflect a different approach to the use of power from that commonly employed in top down, heirarchical organizations.

17.0 Leadership (cont'd.)

STANDARDS STATEMENT	PERFORMANCE INDICATORS
17.3 The leadership is responsible for establishing policies governing the agency and its programs. ***INTERPRETIVE GUIDELINES:*** *It is the role of the agency's leadership to set policy which governs the agency, its programs and operations. Policies may relate to, but are not limited to, the following issues: personnel, finances, volunteers, contractors, fund raising, Board committee functions, conflict of interest, records management and operational activities.* *Policies relating directly to program services are often drafted originally by program staff for consideration by the Board/Collective. Those policies affecting the organization as a whole are more often drafted by a Board/Collective committee or by management and program staff are consulted where these may affect their work.*	• evidence that the Board, or where applicable, the Collective has established written policies for the agency and the program • policies are available to all who require them for operational purposes

17.0 Leadership (cont'd.)

STANDARDS STATEMENT	PERFORMANCE INDICATORS
17.4 The leadership ensures that policies and procedures exist to support the maintenance of quality service and to promote continuous improvement of the program. ***INTERPRETIVE GUIDELINES*** *This standard indicates that agency leadership has responsibility for ensuring that program services are the best they can be. This means having policies in place that support ongoing evaluation and planning and ensuring that steps are taken to make improvements as needed.*	• policies in place to support and ensure planning and evaluation on an ongoing basis • documented evidence that recommendations of program and service evaluations are thoughtfully considered and implemented, as appropriate and feasible (e.g., planning reports, meeting minutes)
17.5 The agency has a policy to consult program staff, and where applicable, volunteers on an ongoing basis regarding decisions affecting the program and their work, and to ensure personnel are informed of the outcome and the rationale for decisions about which they have been consulted. ***INTERPRETIVE GUIDELINES:*** *Consulting with staff, and where applicable volunteers, leadership develops policies and maintains procedures regarding accessibility, health and safety, legal requirements, human resources, cultural diversity, conflict resolution, financial planning and management, and an ethical environment for the management and delivery of services.*	• documented evidence in meeting minutes, etc. showing that personnel have been consulted on policy and program developments under consideration, before any decisions are made

17.0 Leadership (cont'd.)

STANDARDS STATEMENT	PERFORMANCE INDICATORS
17.6 Opportunities exist for open and clear communication between management, staff and volunteers regarding administrative operations of the agency and service delivery practices.	• documentation in minutes of planning and other committee meetings • posted announcements of upcoming open meetings where input is requested • evidence that managers are open to discussing/resolving staff concerns as they arise
17.7 As much as possible, the leadership reflects the diversity of the community.	• visible and documented evidence of diversity and active measures taken to recruit diverse leadership • intent reflected in the agency's accessibility plan
17.8 a. Procedures are in place for regular evaluation of the effectiveness of the leadership of the agency. b. Procedures include seeking input from program staff. ***INTERPRETIVE GUIDELINES:*** *This standard requires that the leadership (i.e., Board and management or, where applicable, the collective), take the time to evaluate itself, its processes and its productivity on a regular basis, at least once every three years, although annually is preferable.*	• regular process in place for Board/Collective evaluation • documented evidence of self-evaluation (e.g., completed self-evaluation forms, meeting minutes, etc.) • demonstration that input was sought from program staff in the evaluation process

18.0 Managing Organizational Quality

PRINCIPLE: Responsiveness to the persons served is meant to be a focus of the organization, reflected in its management practices. The agency's mission, values, operational systems and human resources should demonstrate a commitment to organizational quality and service excellence

INTENT: To ensure the pursuit of quality and service excellence pervades all levels of the organization, involves all staff and volunteers and is communicated to all persons served.

STANDARDS STATEMENT	PERFORMANCE INDICATORS
18.1 a. The agency has a mission statement that describes, in general terms, what the organization is about. b. This mission statement and/or the purposes of the agency are clearly stated in verbal and written communication, and made available to the public.	• a written mission statement describes in broad terms the purposes of the agency, whom it serves and general areas of service • the mission statement is included in various materials/methods the agency uses to communicate to the public (e.g., brochures, posters, flyers, websites, videos, etc.)
18.2 The agency has a statement of organizational philosophy and values, clearly written and easily understood, which underpins all of its programs and other organizational activities. ***INTERPRETIVE GUIDELINES:*** *This standard requires that an organization has considered and decided upon the way in which it will operate, the principles and values which shall be the foundation of its existence.*	• written statement of organizational philosophy and values • SVAP staff, volunteers and Board members are able to explain how program activities fit with the philosophy and values of the agency • policies, systems and practices of the agency are clearly consistent with its philosophy and values (e.g., personnel policies, financial systems, record-keeping practices)

18.0 Managing Organizational Quality (cont'd.)

STANDARDS STATEMENT	PERFORMANCE INDICATORS
18.3 If the agency uses either the term "feminism" or "feminist principles" in its mission or philosophy statement, that term is clearly defined and communicated to staff, volunteers, persons served by the program and any others who come into contact with the program. ***INTERPRETIVE GUIDELINES:*** *To avoid confusion and/or unnecessary reaction, this standard establishes that terms like "feminism", which may have different meanings for different people, will be considered and explained in clear and understandable language.*	• written definition of "feminism" or "feminist principles", where applicable • evidence of communication regarding feminism to persons associated with the program
18.4 The agency consults program staff and volunteers in a timely manner regarding program planning and policy development/changes that may affect their work. See also Section 16.0, Leadership, Standard 16.5. ***INTERPRETIVE GUIDELINES:*** *Good human resource practice requires that agencies consult with their staff and, where applicable, volunteers, when considering changes that could have an impact on their work.*	• documented evidence in meeting minutes, etc. showing that personnel have been consulted on policy and program developments under consideration, well before any decisions are made
18.5 The agency has conflict of interest guidelines in place which apply to Board members, staff and volunteers.	• written conflict of interest guidelines • evidence that they apply to Board, staff and volunteers

19.0 Human Resource Management

PRINCIPLE: Program personnel provide services essential to meet the needs of persons served. The agency establishes and maintains policies which contribute to the effective performance of program personnel. When hiring program staff, the agency takes into consideration the training, skills and knowledge required to provide program services and recognizes both life experience and formal training. The agency acknowledges and supports the need for ongoing professional development and recognizes and addresses the impact of trauma work on program staff and, where applicable, volunteers.

INTENT: To ensure that the agency recruits, manages, retains, and develops program personnel who reflect the intent of the SVAP program, the diversity of the community served, and the mission of the organization.

STANDARDS STATEMENT	PERFORMANCE INDICATORS
Paid Staff 19.1 The agency complies with applicable laws and regulations governing fair employment practices, employment equity, and contractual relationships. ***INTERPRETIVE GUIDELINES:*** *Applicable laws include the B.C. Employment Standards Act, B.C. Human Rights Legislation, tax regulations under Revenue Canada and, where applicable, the B.C. Labour Code.*	• written personnel policies of the agency comply with all applicable legislation and regulations • daily human resource practices are consistent with written policies and with applicable legislation/regulations, as determined by interviews with program staff

19.0 Human Resource Management (cont'd.)

STANDARDS STATEMENT	PERFORMANCE INDICATORS
19.2 As required by applicable funding agreement(s), the agency employs sufficient program staff who are qualified through life experience and/or education to meet the needs of persons served. ***INTERPRETIVE GUIDELINES:*** *This standard does not specify the ratio of staff to persons served by the program. However, the program should be evaluating the degree to which the service required is being provided and identifying where gaps exist. The program may use volunteers to assist in addressing program requirements. (See standards related to volunteers below.)*	• documented evidence that new program staff have the qualifications required for the work • arrangements are made, within available resources, to ensure program functions continue or alternative resources are available for clients during extended absences/vacancies of regular staff • an evaluation is conducted when it becomes apparent that services are not meeting client requirements to determine if the problem is insufficient staffing or lack of qualified, trained personnel • staff turnover is monitored to determine its impact on service delivery

19.0 Human Resource Management (cont'd.)

STANDARDS STATEMENT	PERFORMANCE INDICATORS
19.3 In accordance with B.C. Human Rights legislation, the agency demonstrates in its policies and records non-discrimination with respect to employment, compensation, place of work, or promotion because of race, colour, religion, physical ability, gender, sexual orientation, age, ethnic or national origin, and takes active measures to ensure, to the greatest extent possible, the employment of staff who reflect the diversity of the community served by the program. ***INTERPRETIVE GUIDELINES:*** *Demonstrated actions, as well as written provisions, related to non-discrimination are required to meet this standard.* *It is important to note here that B.C. Human Rights legislation does not apply "with respect to a refusal, limitation, specification or preference based on a bona fide occupational requirement" (Section 13, 4 of the Act). This means that, for example, where job qualifications require that candidates have the capacity to make women who have been assaulted/abused by men feel comfortable, based on such an "occupational requirement", agencies would have the right to exclude men as eligible candidates for such positions. Agencies are also free to apply to B.C. Human Rights Commission for a pre-approved waiver, in order to eliminate any question in this regard.*	• policy regarding employment equity • written employment equity plan that demonstrates the agency's attempts to identify and solicit applications from those who face additional barriers to employment (i.e., outreach in hiring practices) • statement regarding the agency's employment equity policy included in agency/program communication materials • evidence of contact with public or private employment agencies soliciting qualified applicants from marginalized groups

19.0 Human Resource Management (cont'd.)

STANDARDS STATEMENT	PERFORMANCE INDICATORS
19.4 The agency employs SVAP program staff, and managers/administrators who demonstrate an understanding of the social context and dynamics of violence and principles of empowerment, effective communication, collaboration, consultation, equality, justice, autonomy, accountability, and open information sharing.	• results of annual performance reviews of staff, managers and administrators reflect an understanding of concepts outlined in this standard

19.0 Human Resource Management (cont'd.)

STANDARDS STATEMENT	PERFORMANCE INDICATORS
19.5 The agency establishes, maintains, regularly reviews and updates, as needed: a. written personnel policies, which are made available to all agency personnel; b. written job descriptions for each program staff position; c. policies and procedures regarding annual staff performance reviews.	• written personnel policies for each of the above-listed items • evidence that each staff member has access to agency personnel policies • written and dated job descriptions for each program position include the above-listed items, and are provided to each staff member • policies regarding annual performance reviews for program staff, which include the above-listed items • completed performance evaluations and documented evidence of performance objectives set for upcoming evaluation periods • documented evidence that personnel policies and job descriptions are reviewed and updated periodically, and/or as needed (e.g., dated material, meeting minutes) •

19.0 Human Resource Management (cont'd.)

INTERPRETIVE GUIDELINES: *Personnel policies should relate to the following, at minimum: working conditions, hours of work, employee benefits, recruitment and screening, staff orientation and professional development, supervision, maintenance of personnel records, workplace harassment (including sexual), corrective action, termination and employee grievances. This standard does not require that each staff member be given a copy of the personnel policies, but requires that each staff member have access to the policies.* *Job descriptions should include, at minimum: expectations related to training, competencies and experience requirements, the supervisory position to whom the position reports, and specific responsibilities of the job. Every staff member should be given a copy of the job description for their position.* *Annual staff performance reviews should involve staff meaningfully in the process. A job performance evaluation should be based on the duties and responsibilities stated in the job description and should also take into consideration the employee's previous performance evaluation. Upon conclusion of the review, performance objectives for the next evaluation period should be established jointly by the employee and the supervisor.*	

19.0 Human Resource Management (cont'd.)

STANDARDS STATEMENT	PERFORMANCE INDICATORS
19.6 a. Personnel records of program staff are kept confidential and are normally available only to individual employees, their immediate supervisor, and/or program manager/director, and/or agency administrator. Other individuals may be designated for access to personnel records only by agency policy or permission of the employee. b. The agency has a policy indicating what will normally be included in employee personnel files, which is communicated at the time of hiring. c. Safeguards are in place to ensure confidentiality of personnel records. ***INTERPRETIVE GUIDELINES:*** *To enable the agency to carry out its personnel management functions, personnel records should be maintained for each program worker.*	• evidence that personnel records are kept confidential (i.e., written policies re confidentiality of and access to personnel records, records kept under lock and key) • written policy indicating what is included in personnel files • evidence that staff are informed when hired about their personnel file
19.7 The agency provides orientation for new program staff regarding agency and program philosophy, values, services and resources and relevant agency and program policies, including confidentiality and health and safety requirements. ***INTERPRETIVE GUIDELINES:*** *A timely orientation for new staff would normally be conducted within the first month of employment.*	• written policy regarding orientation for new staff • evidence that orientation for each new program staff includes the above-listed items

19.0 Human Resource Management (cont'd.)

STANDARDS STATEMENT	PERFORMANCE INDICATORS
19.8 The agency has a policy stipulating its commitment, within available financial resources, to ongoing professional development for program staff in areas related to providing and improving service. ***INTERPRETIVE GUIDELINES:*** *Along with financial resources, employees are the other main resource enabling the agency and its programs to serve clients. Ongoing development of program staff is fundamental to the provision of quality service, and to continuous improvement of services. Compliance with this standard requires that agencies show commitment and support for staff development to the greatest degree possible. Ultimately, it is preferable if a specific amount of funds and a minimum amount of paid time is allocated each year for professional development for program staff.*	• written policy on professional development for program staff • evidence of periodic assessment of training needs of individual employees • written policy on allocation of funds for professional development • evidence that training funds are allocated equitably among staff • use of a variety of training resources (e.g., training films, guest speakers, reference materials, subscriptions to periodicals, literature reviews, discussion of concepts/issues in staff meetings)

19.0 Human Resource Management (cont'd.)

STANDARDS STATEMENT	PERFORMANCE INDICATORS
19.9 The agency provides: a. opportunities for program staff to access the core training provided by the Ministry of the Attorney General b. staff training with written materials in the prevention of workplace violence c. within available resources, staff training in cultural diversity and sensitivity that leads to competency in dealing with the diversity of populations represented in the community and served by the program.	• evidence that program staff have taken the Ministry of Attorney General core training program • evidence that a training program in prevention of workplace violence is implemented periodically (i.e., using a training log, in-service training or continuing education) • program materials for staff training in cultural diversity • evidence of a training workshop or staff having read and discussed together program training materials related to cultural diversity
19.10 Criminal record checks are conducted for all new staff.	• documented evidence that criminal record checks have been completed for each new staff person in the program
Volunteers/Interns/Trainees (where applicable) 19.11 There is a statement on why Volunteer involvement is desired for the program and who are defined as volunteers. ***INTERPRETIVE GUIDELINES:*** *The agency needs to be clear about why volunteers are involved in the program, and to communicate this to staff, volunteers and clients.*	• written statement on program volunteers and why they are important • this statement is part of the communications used in recruiting volunteers to the program

19.0 Human Resource Management (cont'd.)

STANDARDS STATEMENT	PERFORMANCE INDICATORS
19.12 Job descriptions are in place for Volunteer positions with the program, which include qualifications for the work, duties and reporting supervisor. These are regularly reviewed and updated, as needed. ***INTERPRETIVE GUIDELINES:*** *Just as with paid staff positions, volunteer positions should have job descriptions associated with them, so volunteers can be clear on their work and the framework within which they are to operate.*	• written and dated job descriptions for each volunteer position in the program include the above-listed items, and are provided to each volunteer • documented evidence that volunteer job descriptions are reviewed and updated periodically (e.g., dated material)
19.13 To the greatest extent possible, volunteers working in the program reflect the diversity of the community the program serves. ***INTERPRETIVE GUIDELINES:*** *In order for all survivors to feel as comfortable and welcome as possible in the program, the agency should do everything possible to reflect community diversity at all levels and in all parts of the organization and its programs.*	• agency policy related to ensuring diversity of volunteers • evidence that active measures are taken to recruit diverse volunteers

19.0 Human Resource Management (cont'd.)

STANDARDS STATEMENT	PERFORMANCE INDICATORS
19.14 a. A staff member has been designated responsibility for managing volunteer involvement in the program, and this information is clearly communicated to volunteers. b. Staff are trained to work with volunteers and to understand their needs and motivations for volunteering. c. Volunteers are trained to work effectively with staff. ***INTERPRETIVE GUIDELINES:*** *This standard supports the relationship between staff and volunteers in the program, a relationship critical to effective service, where volunteers are involved. It helps to ensure that the climate within the agency and in the program is conducive to productive volunteer involvement.*	• evidence that volunteers are provided with the information and training necessary to fulfill their responsibilities to the best of their ability • evidence of staff designated to manage volunteers in the program • evidence that any staff working with volunteers have received training in this area
19.15 The agency establishes, maintains, periodically reviews and updates policies and procedures related to program volunteers and interns/trainees, which are communicated to all volunteers and interns/trainees. ***INTERPRETIVE GUIDELINES:*** *Policies regarding volunteers and interns/trainees should cover the following area, at minimum: recruitment and screening, requirement for criminal record check, orientation, supervision, ongoing training and development, appreciation and recognition, performance evaluation, personnel records, corrective action and termination.*	• written policies and/or procedures that cover each of the above-listed items • evidence that policies and procedures are reviewed periodically (e.g., dated material) evidence that volunteers and interns/trainees have access to these policies

19.0 Human Resource Management (cont'd.)

STANDARDS STATEMENT	PERFORMANCE INDICATORS
19.16 a. Volunteers and interns/trainees involved in program activities are supervised and have the qualifications required for their areas of responsibility. b. If unable to fulfill their responsibility, volunteers and/or Interns/trainees are, wherever Feasible, offered alternate Responsibilities. ***INTERPRETIVE GUIDELINES:*** *The intent of this standard is to ensure that volunteers and interns/trainees are supervised and generally treated as unpaid employees. Volunteers should be qualified for the services they provide and should be recruited, oriented, trained and supervised similarly to an employee.*	• evidence that, with whatever orientation and training are provided by the program, volunteers and interns/trainees have the qualifications necessary for their work • evidence of staff supervision and evaluation of the work of volunteers and interns/trainees • list of alternative responsibilities for volunteers and interns/trainees
19.17 Confidential personnel records are maintained for each volunteer and intern/trainee. ***INTERPRETIVE GUIDELINES:*** *Personnel records for volunteers include their activities and training, hours served, evaluations, etc. These records are subject to the same policies as are personnel records for paid staff.*	• evidence that personnel records for volunteers are kept confidential (i.e., written policies re confidentiality of and access to personnel records, records kept under lock and key) • written policy indicating what is included in volunteer personnel files • evidence that volunteers are informed when they begin work with the program about their personnel file

19.0 Human Resource Management (cont'd.)

STANDARDS STATEMENT	PERFORMANCE INDICATORS
19.18 Any personal risks or liabilities that might be encountered by volunteers or interns/trainees are clearly communicated to them, along with information on insurance coverage.	• written documentation of any potential personal risks or liabilities for volunteers • evidence that volunteers and interns/trainees are informed at their orientation of these risks and given information on insurance coverage such as use of own vehicle, coverage for malpractice, negligence, etc.
19.19 a. To the greatest extent possible, input is sought from administration, staff, volunteers and clients in designing the volunteer component of the program. b. Volunteers have opportunities to voice opinions and make suggestions for change, and their input is respected and valued. Volunteers are involved in decisions that affect their work. ***INTERPRETIVE GUIDELINES:*** *In order for volunteers to have investment and ownership in their work, the agency must ensure they are consulted on any matters which could have an impact on the volunteer program.*	• documented evidence in meeting minutes, etc. showing that staff, volunteers, and clients where feasible, have been consulted on volunteer program developments under consideration, before any decisions are made • management and staff have an open door policy to volunteers
19.20 The roles and responsibilities of volunteers and/or interns/trainees and their impact on the program are evaluated regularly.	• documented evidence of periodic evaluation of the involvement of volunteers in the program (e.g., through client satisfaction surveys, discussions with staff, etc.)

20.0 Financial Management

PRINCIPLE: Financial management of the program should be conducted in a manner that is consistent with the purposes and financial policies of the agency and in accordance with responsible fiscal practices and legal requirements. Gaining the input of program staff can be an important part of the budget development and financial management process.

INTENT: To ensure the financial health and sustainability of the program, that the program is fiscally accountable, and that areas of designated responsibility for program finances are clearly outlined.

STANDARDS STATEMENT	PERFORMANCE INDICATORS
20.1 The agency has a financial plan that includes: a. a budget that is appropriately authorized and periodically reviewed by the leadership, b. the revenue regarded as necessary to produce the desired program outcomes identified by the agency, c. attention to long-term financial solvency and continuity of program services. ***INTERPRETIVE GUIDELINES:*** *The financial plan demonstrates that it addresses the needs and resources necessary to achieve identified goals. It includes the budget and additional documentation reflecting that the agency has reviewed, anticipated and considered its revenues and expenses and how to maintain the continuity of services.*	• annual budget with associated documentation • minutes of meetings reflecting thorough discussion and approval of the budget by the Board of Directors, or where applicable, the Collective • long term plan for financial solvency • evidence that the budget is reviewed periodically throughout the year by the Board/Collective and by program staff

20.0 Financial Management (cont'd.)

STANDARDS STATEMENT	PERFORMANCE INDICATORS
20.2 The agency demonstrates its fiscal stability through the following: a. an independent audit, or, in small agencies, a review engagement, of its financial status, performed annually by a certified accountant, b. taking action in response to recommendations identified in the audits or review engagements, and c. an internal system of fiscal control. ***INTERPRETIVE GUIDELINES:*** *The accountant conducting the audit or review engagement has no personal relationship with the funding source and must be independent of the agency (i.e., is not a member of the Board or Collective).* *The fiscal control system in the agency is to ensure that all mobile assets of the agency are handled appropriately and in a secure manner.*	• opinion letter and other documents associated with the audit or review engagement prepared annually • evidence documented in minutes, correspondence and/or reports of action taken on recommendations from the accountant • evidence that the internal system of fiscal control includes policies and procedures which address cash control, working capital and contingency funds, investment of funds, inventory of capital equipment, fraud and protection of contributed materials and funds against misappropriation

20.0 Financial Management (cont'd.)

STANDARDS STATEMENT	PERFORMANCE INDICATORS
20.3 The organization has insurance coverage that: a. adequately protects all assets, the persons served, volunteers, staff and Board against reasonable claims due to adverse events for which the agency is liable, b. includes coverage for buildings, equipment and inventory, and worker's compensation, and c. is reviewed annually to ensure appropriate and sufficient coverage. ***INTERPRETIVE GUIDELINES:*** *All agencies operating SVAP programs are eligible for coverage under the B.C Government Master Insurance Plan. The MIP covers liability insurance only. Additional insurance is necessary for fire, theft, etc. The agency should review its insurance coverage annually for adequacy and appropriateness. The agency is encouraged to seek input from its insurance agency or other insurance professionals about the adequacy of coverage. If, for some reason, the agency has chosen not to join the MIP, alternative liability insurance will be necessary.*	• minutes of meetings and/or orientation sessions of the Board/Collective reflecting an awareness and understanding of their responsibilities with respect to insurance coverage • agreement for liability insurance coverage under MIP or some alternative • agreement for additional insurance coverage for fire, theft, etc. for all premises in which the agency/program operate • evidence of Worker's Compensation coverage
20.4 The agency discloses to contributors its charitable tax status. ***INTERPRETIVE GUIDELINES:*** *The intent of this standard is to ensure that appropriate information about the agency's tax status is available to its contributors.*	• statement re charitable tax status/number on agency/program brochures, letterhead, and/or other materials the agency/program uses to communicate to the public

21.0 Health and Safety

PRINCIPLE: The agency is responsible for ensuring that the environment in which the SVAP program is provided is safe and healthy for SVAP staff and volunteers and for survivors who use the program services. The agency is expected to provide a physical facility which conforms to applicable zoning and safety regulations, and to establish safety procedures relating to both day to day operations and emergency situations which take the whole person into consideration.

INTENT: To ensure that the program is provided in a safe environment, under conditions that promote, not endanger, the health of persons served, staff and volunteers. Conditions include physical, emotional and mental well-being relative to vulnerability.

STANDARDS STATEMENT	PERFORMANCE INDICATORS
21.1 a. The SVAP program operates in a facility that meets all electrical, sanitation, plumbing, building, fire and other safety codes as set out in municipal, provincial and federal government standards. b. The program is delivered in a manner which complies with requirements of the Worker's Compensation Board.	• documented evidence of inspection that the facility meets all safety codes listed above • checklist demonstrating that the agency meets BC Worker's Compensation requirements for on-the-job safety of program workers.

21.0 Health and Safety (cont'd.)

STANDARDS STATEMENT	PERFORMANCE INDICATORS
21.2 a. The agency has a health and safety program which addresses issues related to the mental health of program staff and volunteers as well as the physical safety of staff, volunteers and persons served by the program. b. Designated managerial staff have specific responsibility for appropriate health and safety procedures. c. Daily operations of the organization demonstrate an awareness of the need to maintain a safe and healthy environment. ***INTERPRETIVE GUIDELINES:*** *In order to meet this standard, an agency must be able to demonstrate through various records that a health and safety program exists for the agency.*	• meeting minutes or checklists that demonstrate health and safety program activity • supporting evidence identifying individuals responsible for the health and safety program (e.g., job descriptions, list of safety committee members, related policies and procedures) • posters or other reminders about health and safety are visible/accessible • safety planning is a part of any program activity which could potentially be hazardous

21.0 Health and Safety (cont'd.)

STANDARDS STATEMENT	PERFORMANCE INDICATORS
21.3 a. Self inspections of the facility in which the program operates are conducted annually by the agency, and the results are documented. Potential problem areas are handled quickly and effectively. b. At least every three years, a fire safety inspection of the facility in which the program operates is conducted by competent external authorities. Unsafe conditions are addressed immediately. ***INTERPRETIVE GUIDELINES:*** *Staff members conducting self-inspections should have appropriate safety knowledge and use a checklist or other means of identifying the locations inspected. Corrective action plans should include the safety problems identified during the inspection and recommended actions for dealing with each problem area.* *The fire safety inspection may be conducted by a representative of the fire department, a safety consultant in private practice, or a representative of the agency's insurance carrier.*	• self-inspection checklists and corrective action plans signed and dated by the persons inspecting and the manager with designated authority for the health and safety program • inspection reports prepared by the external authorities identifying the areas/locations covered and the inspection date • documented evidence, with dates, of actions taken to correct problems identified by both the self-inspections and the inspections conducted by external authorities

21.0 Health and Safety (cont'd.)

STANDARDS STATEMENT	PERFORMANCE INDICATORS
21.4 a. The agency establishes emergency plans and procedures. b. The emergency plan is communicated to all personnel. c. Parts of the emergency plan are tested periodically. Areas of weakness in the plan are addressed effectively. ***INTERPRETIVE GUIDELINES:*** *Emergency plans should, at minimum, address the following:* • *workplace threats and violence* • *fires, including safety equipment, evacuation procedures and protocols with police and fire agencies* • *power failures, including lightning and communication equipment* • *medical emergencies* • *natural disasters* *The emergency plan should also include:* • *procedures for ready access to current personnel information, client records and other sources that may be needed in emergency situations* • *plans for returning to service following emergencies*	• written evidence of the existence of an emergency plan which addresses at least the following: workplace threats and violence, fires, power failures, medical emergencies and natural disaster • documentation showing that the plan includes procedures for quick access to personnel and client information • written plan for returning to service following emergencies • demonstrated evidence that the emergency plan is communicated to all new staff • checklists showing when different parts of the plan have been tested and the results of the tests documented evidence, with dates demonstrating that areas of weakness revealed in the tests have been corrected

21.0 Health and Safety (cont'd.)

STANDARDS STATEMENT	PERFORMANCE INDICATORS
21.5 a. Training is provided to staff/volunteers dealing with critical incidents. b. Policies and procedures are in place for reporting critical incidents. c. Procedures are in place for staff and volunteer debriefing of critical incidents. ***INTERPRETIVE GUIDELINES:*** *Critical incidents can occur at any time in the program's operation. Examples of critical incidents include any of the emergencies listed above: workplace violence, a medical emergency, fire, a natural disaster, or a power failure. Other examples are theft, break-ins, violence in the immediate community which might have a carry-over affect on program clients or staff. It is not possible to anticipate the whole range of possible critical incidents; however, it is important for the agency to be prepared for any possibility.*	• plan/outline for staff and volunteer orientation on critical incidents • documented evidence that all new staff and volunteers have been oriented • policies and procedures in writing regarding reporting and debriefing of critical incidents • forms for reporting critical incidents • evidence that critical incident debriefing has occurred (e.g., in reports)

21.0 Health and Safety (cont'd.)

STANDARDS STATEMENT	PERFORMANCE INDICATORS
21.6 a. The agency demonstrates an awareness of vicarious traumatization, and provides opportunities for staff and volunteers to be supported in their work on an ongoing basis, and as needed. b. Resources for debriefing are regularly available to staff and to volunteers. ***INTERPRETIVE GUIDELINES:*** *To meet this standard, agencies must be able to show that debriefing is a regular and valued part of program activity. That means that time and resources are allotted for debriefing, when necessary. To facilitate openness in debriefing, it is essential to provide workers with debriefing partners they feel they can trust. (e.g., qualified peers)*	• staff records show time allotted for debriefing as part of ongoing activity • evidence that debriefing is covered by principles of confidentiality • documentation showing who is available for staff to debrief with
21.7 First aid equipment and supplies are kept in a designated location on site. All personnel are informed of the location of this material.	• documented evidence that new staff are informed of the location of first aid material • first aid material is kept in a sealed container designated for this purpose and is available to all staff and volunteers
21.8 Policies and procedures are in place for ensuring the safety of staff and persons the program serves when meeting on premises which are outside regular program offices.	• written policies and procedures relate to the safety of program staff and clients when meeting off the premises • if applicable, evidence that alternate office premises used for regular meetings with clients meet all fire and safety regulations

21.0 Health and Safety (cont'd.)

STANDARDS STATEMENT		PERFORMANCE INDICATORS
21.9	Policies and procedures are in place related to staff and volunteer use of their own vehicles in conjunction with the program.	• written policies and procedures relate to program-related use of own vehicle for staff and volunteers • policies include, at minimum, the amount of vehicle insurance, the state of repair of the vehicle and legal requirements relating to the conduct of drivers and passengers

OTHER PROGRAM RELATED STANDARDS

22.0 Community Relations and Coordination

PRINCIPLE: SVAP's actively foster good community relations, as program success depends heavily on informal community networks and relationships, shared understanding of the program and the dynamics of violence and community coordination protocols.

Program coordinators promote confidence in the program and educate the public and organizations about what the program offers and what assistance it requires in order to carry out its mandate. In addition, program staff are fully knowledgeable about other agencies serving persons who have been victimized.

Where community coordination agreements exist among justice system and other community agencies serving survivors of violence, they provide clear guidelines and procedures for how each service works and the ways in which they will work together to effectively coordinate services.

INTENT: To ensure that the program communicates, educates and coordinates effectively with other justice system and community programs in order to provide best for the needs and interests of persons who have been victimized.

STANDARDS STATEMENT	PERFORMANCE INDICATORS
22.1 The program provides key information about its service to justice system and community partners and to the community it serves. ***INTERPRETIVE GUIDELINES:*** *The intent of this standard is to ensure that organizations and individuals needing to know about the program in order to access it, make referrals, coordinate services, etc. have the information they need.*	• evidence in program brochures and/or other print materials, minutes of inter-agency meetings/community forums, etc. that the following program information is communicated to all those listed in the above standard: - program objectives - description of services - those the program is meant to serve - eligibility requirements - service philosophy and values • documented evidence (e.g., community agency surveys, inter-agency meeting minutes, etc.) that the program information received by the justice system and key referral agencies meets their needs

22.0 Community Relations and Coordination (cont'd.)

STANDARDS STATEMENT	PERFORMANCE INDICATORS
22.2 a. The program provides ready access to community resource information for staff and, where applicable, volunteers, in order to support them in providing appropriate and useful referral information to survivors. b. Program staff and volunteers are trained in the use of community resource information, and able to make referrals effectively. ***INTERPRETIVE GUIDELINES:*** *The need for referral to other community resources is ongoing and may occur at any point while providing service to a survivor. Program staff need to be aware of the range of resources available in the community and to be able to make useful referrals, where appropriate and/or necessary.*	• community resource directory or lists of referral resources available to program staff, and where applicable, to volunteers • evidence that program staff/volunteers have been trained in making referrals (e.g., curriculum materials, signed checklist, etc.) • evidence of discussion with the survivor regarding any referral • documentation of all referrals made and the reason(s) for them • referrals comply with local protocol agreements, where applicable
22.3 The program maintains ongoing communication links and coordinates services with key referral agencies, justice system personnel and other related community agencies. ***INTERPRETIVE GUIDELINES:*** *Inter-agency communication and coordination occurs in a number of different, but related, ways and may include: information sharing, ongoing networking, joint task forces, coordination protocols , inter-agency planning and reciprocal refresher courses.*	• evidence of inter-agency communication and coordination (e.g., minutes of information-sharing meetings, joint planning meetings, task force meetings, etc.)

22.0 Community Relations and Coordination (cont'd.)

STANDARDS STATEMENT	PERFORMANCE INDICATORS
22.3 a. Where community coordination protocols have been developed jointly with the justice system and related community agencies to support survivors, the agency is a party to them. b. The primacy of client needs is not compromised by community coordination committees. When there is a conflict, every attempt will be made to address this through protocol agreements. ***INTERPRETIVE GUIDELINES:*** *Community coordination protocols should include, at minimum, the following components:* • *statement of principles* • *description of services provided by each party to the agreement* • *outline of steps in the referral process* • *confidentiality and processes for appropriate information sharing* • *referral procedures by type of crime* • *procedures for ongoing communication among participants* • *procedures for identifying and resolving problems in using the protocols*	• written community coordination protocols for joint referral and coordination of services • evidence that the program is included in the protocols • documented evidence that problems experienced by the program in using the protocols are brought forward for discussion/resolution

22.0 Community Relations and Coordination (cont'd.)

STANDARDS STATEMENT	PERFORMANCE INDICATORS
22.5 The agency actively supports program staff to participate in community liaison and networking activities as part of their job. ***INTERPRETIVE GUIDELINES:*** *In order to represent the program in the community, engage in community education efforts on violence issues and facilitate effective client referrals, it is essential for staff to be part of community and inter-agency activity.*	• evidence that program staff participate in community liaison activities (e.g., in job description, inter-agency meeting and community planning minutes, etc.)

22.0 Community Relations and Coordination (cont'd.)

STANDARDS STATEMENT	PERFORMANCE INDICATORS
22.6 a. The program takes every opportunity, when staff and financial resources permit, to educate allied professionals about the issues and dynamics of adult and childhood abuse and sexual assault and violence in intimate relationships, and the impact of the systems (i.e., justice, health and social services) upon survivors. b. Program staff demonstrate respect for the knowledge and perspectives of other professionals. Education services for professionals are structured as exchanges of different knowledge and perspectives. ***INTERPRETIVE GUIDELINES:*** *The intent of this standard is to facilitate the mutual understanding of all professionals in the justice system and related community services concerning the issues of violence affecting survivors and the various challenges involved, in order to improve overall systems support to survivors and enhance their recovery process.*	• evidence of organized educational activities (e.g., dates, curriculum) • evidence of less formal discussions to educate systems personnel (e.g., minutes of inter-agency meetings or joint meetings with specific agencies reflecting educational activity to improve systems support • evidence of mutual educational activity (e.g., exchange programs)

23.0 Public Education Services (where applicable)

PRINCIPLE: Public education activities facilitate a greater awareness and understanding in the community of victimization issues, and thereby enable those who may need to access program services to do so more readily. In addition, educational activities help strengthen community support for the program and for persons who are victimized, and ultimately, for prevention of these crimes against the person.

INTENT: To educate members of the public regarding issues related to sexual assault, violence in intimate relationships, child sexual abuse and criminal harassment, and about service available to persons who have been victimized.

STANDARDS STATEMENT	PERFORMANCE INDICATORS
23.1 a. Public awareness/education activities are conducted on an ongoing basis. b. Periodic evaluations are conducted to determine the effectiveness of public awareness activities. ***INTERPRETIVE GUIDELINES:*** *The public awareness program may include one or more of the following activities: brochures promoting awareness of victim issues, public service announcements, news or feature stories in the local print or broadcast media, community education presentations to community groups, Internet websites, taking a lead role in activities such as Prevention of Violence Against Women Week, Take Back the Night, December 6th Memorial, Annual Conference on Male Sexual Victimization and other activities relevant to client populations, or other communications appropriate to the area the program serves.*	• evidence of several public awareness/education activities conducted annually • documented evidence of periodic evaluation (e.g., every 3 years) of public education activities

Appendix A

Specialized Victim Assistance Program
Suggested Best Practices

Introduction

The following suggestions have been identified to date through the standards development process as possible "best practices" for Specialized Victim Assistance Programs. The items listed were determined to be beyond the capacity of current financial and staffing resources in SVAP's. Consequently, they have been separated out for future consideration by the sector and the funder. The list is not meant to be, in any way, exhaustive, but solely generated by the present standards development process.

Some Best Practice Suggestions

1. **Program Function**
   It has been suggested that "hate crimes" might be included as part of the program purpose. Some programs presently address those hate crimes related to the existing program mandate.

2. **Accessibility**
   1. The agency has an accessibility plan demonstrating the active measures it will take in addressing those barriers identified through a program accessibility audit.

   2. Progress in implementing the accessibility plan is reviewed annually by designated individuals within the agency and reported to the Board of Directors or, where applicable, the Collective.

3. **Service Conclusion**
   A brief summary is prepared on each survivor leaving the program (i.e., those who have been receiving ongoing service), and inserted in that person's file. The note will include the status at closure and the outcomes achieved during the service period.
   (N.B. Clients often leave and return to a service several times. The moment of closure is not always clear.)

4. **Evaluation**
   1. Client Participation
   Processes used to evaluate the quality and appropriateness of service must include feedback from clients.

2. Community Referral Agency Participation

A survey of community referral agencies is conducted at minimum every two years to gain feedback on the program's referral processes, effectiveness, etc. that can assist in improving service quality.

5. Criminal Record Checks

Criminal record checks are done for all Board/Collective members.

6. Code of Ethics

a. The agency has a code of ethics and conduct which applies and is communicated to all Board/Collective members, staff and volunteers.

b. Policies and procedures are in place for investigating and acting on allegations of violation of the code.

7. Human Resource Management

Case consultation and/or counselling support are provided for staff on a regular basis.

8. Training Services for Allied Professionals

Suggestion that this be a wholly separate section. Note that a very abbreviated version of this has been included in the existing section on Community Relations and Coordination.

Intent Statement:

To ensure that other professionals in the justice system and related community services providing services to survivors are aware of and understand the issues and dynamics affecting persons who have been victimized by sexual assault, partner assault, childhood sexual abuse and criminal harassment.

Standards Statements:

1. Each year, the program conducts a needs assessment of two of the following allied professional groups: law enforcement agencies, prosecutors, judges, corrections officers, substance abuse professionals, emergency room personnel, mental health professionals, medical and other hospital personnel, local educators, social service personnel, community organizers and the media to determine training needs.

2. The program develops or acquires training materials or packages to provide training annually to the two selected groups. Materials have information on victim issues, cross-cultural service delivery and staff victimization.

3. The program develops reciprocal training agreements each year with two selected groups.

4. The program trains trainers or arranges for outside trainers to provide two days a year of training to each of the two selected groups.

5. The program provides follow-up educational materials to each of the selected groups on an ongoing basis.

9. Public Education

The agency develops and implements an annual public education plan which includes a minimum of three public education projects each year.